DIALOGUES
CONCERNING
NATURAL RELIGION.

By DAVID HUME, Esq.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

DIVINE BENEVOLENCE
ASSERTED;
AND VINDICATED FROM
THE OBJECTIONS
OF
ANCIENT AND MODERN SCEPTICS.

By THOMAS BALGUY, D. D.
ARCHDEACON OF WINCHESTER.

Faciam rem non difficilem, cauſam Deorum agam.
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PAMPHILUS to HERMIPPUS.

IT has been remarked, my HERMIPPUS, that though the ancient philoſophers conveyed moſt of their inſtruction in the form of dialogue, this method of compoſition has been little practiſed in later ages, and has ſeldom ſucceeded in the hands of thoſe who have attempted it.

Accurate and regular argument, indeed, ſuch as is now expected of philoſophical inquirers, naturally throws a man into the methodical and didactic manner; where he can immediately, without preparation, explain the point at which he aims; and thence proceed, without interruption, to deduce the proofs on which it is eſtabliſhed. To deliver a SYSTEM in converſation, ſcarcely appears natural; and while the dialogue-writer deſires, by departing from the direct ſtyle of compoſition, to give a freer air to his performance, and avoid the appearance of *Author* and *Reader*, he is apt to run into a worſe inconvenience, and convey the image of *Pedagogue* and *Pupil*. Or if he carries on the diſpute in the natural ſpirit of good company, by throwing in a variety of topics, and preſerving a proper balance among the ſpeakers; he often loſes ſo much time in preparations and tranſitions, that the reader will ſcarcely think himſelf compenſated, by all the graces of dialogue, for the order, brevity, and preciſion, which are ſacrificed to them.

THERE are ſome ſubjects, however, to which dialogue-writing is peculiarly adapted, and where it is ſtill preferable to the direct and ſimple method of compoſition.

ANY point of doctrine, which is ſo *obvious* that it ſcarcely admits of diſpute, but at the ſame time ſo *important* that it cannot be too often inculcated, ſeems to require ſome ſuch

method

method of handling it; where the novelty of the manner may compensate the triteness of the subject; where the vivacity of conversation may enforce the precept; and where the variety of lights, presented by various personages and characters, may appear neither tedious nor redundant.

Any question of philosophy, on the other hand, which is so *obscure* and *uncertain*, that human reason can reach no fixed determination with regard to it; if it should be treated at all, seems to lead us naturally into the style of dialogue and conversation. Reasonable men may be allowed to differ, where no one can reasonably be positive: Opposite sentiments, even without any decision, afford an agreeable amusement: and if the subject be curious and interesting, the book carries us, in a manner, into company; and unites the two greatest and purest pleasures of human life, study and society.

Happily, these circumstances are all to be found in the subject of NATURAL RELIGION. What truth so obvious, so certain, as the being of a God, which the most ignorant ages have acknowledged, for which the most refined geniuses have ambitiously striven to produce new proofs and arguments? What truth so important as this, which is the ground of all our hopes, the surest foundation of morality, the firmest support of society, and the

only principle which ought never to be a moment abſent from our thoughts and meditations? But in treating of this obvious and important truth; what obſcure queſtions occur, concerning the NATURE of that divine Being; his attributes, his decrees, his plan of providence? Theſe have been always ſubjected to the diſputations of men: Concerning theſe, human reaſon has not reached any certain determination: But theſe are topics ſo intereſting, that we cannot reſtrain our reſtleſs inquiry with regard to them; though nothing but doubt, uncertainty, and contradiction, have as yet been the reſult of our moſt accurate reſearches.

THIS I had lately occaſion to obſerve, while I paſſed, as uſual, part of the ſummer-ſeaſon with CLEANTHES, and was preſent at thoſe converſations of his with PHILO and DEMEA, of which I gave you lately ſome imperfect account. Your curioſity, you then told me, was ſo excited, that I muſt of neceſſity enter into a more exact detail of their reaſonings, and diſplay thoſe various ſyſtems which they advanced with regard to ſo delicate a ſubject as that of Natural Religion. The remarkable contraſt in their characters ſtill farther raiſed your expectations; while you oppoſed the accurate philoſophical turn of CLEANTHES to the careleſs ſcepticiſm of PHILO, or compared either of their diſpoſitions with the rigid inflexible

inflexible orthodoxy of DEMEA. My youth rendered me a mere auditor of their disputes; and that curiosity natural to the early season of life, has so deeply imprinted in my memory the whole chain and connection of their arguments, that, I hope, I shall not omit or confound any considerable part of them in the recital.

PART I.

AFTER I joined the company, whom I found sitting in CLEANTHES's library, DEMEA paid CLEANTHES some compliments, on the great care which he took of my education, and on his unwearied perseverance and constancy in all his friendships. The father of PAMPHILUS, said he, was your intimate friend: the son is your pupil; and may indeed be regarded as your adopted son, were we to judge by the pains which you bestow in conveying to him every useful branch of literature and science. You are no more wanting, I am persuaded, in prudence than in industry. I shall, therefore, communicate to you a maxim which I have observed with regard to my own children, that I may learn how far it agrees with your practice. The method I follow in their education is founded on the saying of an ancient, "That "students of philosophy ought first to learn Logics, "then Ethics, next Physics, last of all the Nature "of the Gods." This science of Natural

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* Chryſippus apud Plut. de repug. Stoicorum.

Theology, according to him, being the moſt profound and abſtruſe of any, required the matureſt judgment in its ſtudents; and none but a mind, enriched with all the other ſciences, can ſafely be entruſted with it.

ARE you ſo late, ſays PHILO, in teaching your children the principles of religion? Is there no danger of their neglecting, or rejecting altogether, thoſe opinions, of which they have heard ſo little during the whole courſe of their education? It is only as a ſcience, replied DEMEA, ſubjected to human reaſoning and diſputation, that I poſtpone the ſtudy of Natural Theology. To ſeaſon their minds with early piety, is my chief care; and by continual precept and inſtruction, and I hope too by example, I imprint deeply on their tender minds an habitual reverence for all the principles of religion. While they paſs through every other ſcience, I ſtill remark the uncertainty of each part; the eternal diſputations of men; the obſcurity of all philoſophy; and the ſtrange, ridiculous concluſions, which ſome of the greateſt geniuſes have derived from the principles of mere human reaſon. Having thus tamed their mind to a proper ſubmiſſion and ſelf-diffidence, I have no longer any ſcruple of opening to them the greateſt myſteries of religion; nor apprehend any danger from that aſſuming arrogance of philoſophy, which may lead them to reject the moſt eſtabliſhed doctrines and opinions.

YOUR

YOUR precaution, says PHILO, of ſeaſoning your childrens minds early with piety, is certainly very reaſonable; and no more than is requiſite in this profane and irreligious age. But what I chiefly admire in your plan of education, is your method of drawing advantage from the very principles of philoſophy and learning, which, by inſpiring pride and ſelf-ſufficiency, have commonly, in all ages, been found ſo deſtructive to the principles of religion. The vulgar, indeed, we may remark, who are unacquainted with ſcience and profound inquiry, obſerving the endleſs diſputes of the learned, have commonly a thorough contempt for Philoſophy; and rivet themſelves the faſter, by that means, in the great points of theology which have been taught them. Thoſe who enter a little into ſtudy and inquiry, finding many appearances of evidence in doctrines the neweſt and moſt extraordinary, think nothing too difficult for human reaſon; and, preſumptuouſly breaking thro' all fences, profane the inmoſt ſanctuaries of the temple. But CLEANTHES will, I hope, agree with me, that, after we have abandoned ignorance, the ſureſt remedy, there is ſtill one expedient left to prevent this profane liberty. Let DEMEA's principles be improved and cultivated: let us become thoroughly ſenſible of the weakneſs, blindneſs, and narrow limits, of human reaſon: let us duly conſider its uncertainty and endleſs contrarieties, even in ſubjects of common life and practice: let the errors and deceits of our

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very ſenſes be ſet before us; the inſuperable difficulties which attend firſt principles in all ſyſtems; the contradictions which adhere to the very ideas of matter, cauſe and effect, extenſion, ſpace, time, motion; and, in a word, quantity of all kinds, the object of the only ſcience that can fairly pretend to any certainty or evidence. When theſe topics are diſplayed in their full light, as they are by ſome philoſophers and almoſt all divines; who can retain ſuch confidence in this frail faculty of reaſon as to pay any regard to its determinations in points ſo ſublime, ſo abſtruſe, ſo remote from common life and experience? When the coherence of the parts of a ſtone, or even that compoſition of parts which renders it extended; when theſe familiar objects, I ſay, are ſo inexplicable, and contain circumſtances ſo repugnant and contradictory; with what aſſurance can we decide concerning the origin of worlds, or trace their hiſtory from eternity to eternity?

While Philo pronounced theſe words, I could obſerve a ſmile in the countenance both of Demea and Cleanthes. That of Demea ſeemed to imply an unreſerved ſatisfaction in the doctrines delivered. But, in Cleanthes's features, I could diſtinguiſh an air of fineſſe; as if he perceived ſome raillery or artificial malice in the reaſonings of Philo.

You

You propose then, PHILO, said CLEANTHES, to erect religious faith on philosophical scepticism; and you think, that if certainty or evidence be expelled from every other subject of inquiry, it will all retire to these theological doctrines, and there acquire a superior force and authority. Whether your scepticism be as absolute and sincere as you pretend, we shall learn by and by, when the company breaks up: we shall then see, whether you go out at the door or the window; and whether you really doubt, if your body has gravity, or can be injured by its fall; according to popular opinion, derived from our fallacious senses, and more fallacious experience. And this consideration, DEMEA, may, I think, fairly serve to abate our ill-will to this humorous sect of the sceptics. If they be thoroughly in earnest, they will not long trouble the world with their doubts, cavils, and disputes: if they be only in jest, they are, perhaps, bad raillers; but can never be very dangerous, either to the state, to philosophy, or to religion.

IN reality, PHILO, continued he, it seems certain, that though a man, in a flush of humour, after intense reflection on the many contradictions and imperfections of human reason, may entirely renounce all belief and opinion; it is impossible for him to persevere in this total scepticism, or make it appear in his conduct for a few hours. External objects press in upon him: passions solicit him: his philoso-

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phical melancholy diſſipates; and even the utmoſt violence upon his own temper will not be able, during any time, to preſerve the poor appearance of ſcepticiſm. And for what reaſon impoſe on himſelf ſuch a violence? This is a point in which it will be impoſſible for him ever to ſatisfy himſelf, conſiſtently with his ſceptical principles: ſo that upon the whole nothing could be more ridiculous than the principles of the ancient PYRRHONIANS; if in reality they endeavoured, as is pretended, to extend, throughout, the ſame ſcepticiſm, which they had learned from the declamations of their ſchools, and which they ought to have confined to them.

IN this view, there appears a great reſemblance between the ſects of the STOICS and PYRRHONIANS, though perpetual antagoniſts: and both of them ſeem founded on this erroneous maxim, That what a man can perform ſometimes, and in ſome diſpoſitions, he can perform always, and in every diſpoſition. When the mind, by Stoical reflections, is elevated into a ſublime enthuſiaſm of virtue, and ſtrongly ſmit with any *ſpecies* of honour or public good, the utmoſt bodily pain and ſufferings will not prevail over ſuch a high ſenſe of duty; and it is poſſible, perhaps, by its means, even to ſmile and exult in the midſt of tortures. If this ſometimes may be the caſe in fact and reality, much more may a philoſopher, in his ſchool, or even in his cloſet, work himſelf up to ſuch an enthu-

enthuſiaſm, and ſupport in imagination the acuteſt pain or moſt calamitous event which he can poſſibly conceive. But how ſhall he ſupport this enthuſiaſm itſelf? The bent of his mind relaxes, and cannot be recalled at pleaſure: Avocations lead him aſtray: Misfortunes attack him unawares: And the *philoſopher* ſinks by degrees into the *plebeian*.

I ALLOW of your compariſon between the STOICS and SCEPTICS, replied PHILO. But you may obſerve, at the ſame time, that though the mind cannot, in Stoiciſm, ſupport the higheſt flights of philoſophy; yet, even when it ſinks lower, it ſtill retains ſomewhat of its former diſpoſition; and the effects of the Stoic's reaſoning will appear in his conduct in common life, and through the whole tenor of his actions. The ancient ſchools, particularly that of ZENO, produced examples of virtue and conſtancy which ſeem aſtoniſhing to preſent times.

> Vain Wiſdom all, and falſe Philoſophy.
> Yet with a pleaſing ſorcery could charm
> Pain, for a while, or anguiſh; and excite
> Fallacious Hope, or arm the obdurate breaſt
> With ſtubborn Patience, as with triple ſteel.

In like manner, if a man has accuſtomed himſelf to ſceptical conſiderations on the uncertainty and narrow limits of reaſon, he will not entirely forget them when he turns his reflection on other ſubjects; but in all his philoſophical principles and reaſoning, I dare not ſay in his common

common conduct, he will be found different from thoſe who either never formed any opinions in the caſe, or have entertained ſentiments more favourable to human reaſon.

To whatever length any one may puſh his ſpeculative principles of ſcepticiſm, he muſt act, I own, and live, and converſe, like other men; and for this conduct he is not obliged to give any other reaſon, than the abſolute neceſſity he lies under of ſo doing. If he ever carries his ſpeculations farther than this neceſſity conſtrains him, and philoſophiſes either on natural or moral ſubjects, he is allured by a certain pleaſure and ſatisfaction which he finds in employing himſelf after that manner. He conſiders beſides, that every one, even in common life, is conſtrained to have more or leſs of this philoſophy; that from our earlieſt infancy we make continual advances in forming more general principles of conduct and reaſoning; that the larger experience we acquire, and the ſtronger reaſon we are endued with, we always render our principles the more general and comprehenſive; and that what we call *philoſophy* is nothing but a more regular and methodical operation of the ſame kind. To philoſophiſe on ſuch ſubjects is nothing eſſentially different from reaſoning on common life; and we may only expect greater ſtability, if not greater truth, from our philoſophy, on account of its exacter and more ſcrupulous method of proceeding.

But when we look beyond human affairs and the properties of the ſurrounding bodies: When we carry our ſpeculations into the two eternities, before and after the preſent ſtate of things; into the creation and formation of the univerſe; the exiſtence and properties of ſpirits; the powers and operations of one univerſal Spirit, exiſting without beginning and without end, omnipotent, omniſcient, immutable, infinite, and incomprehenſible: we muſt be far removed from the ſmalleſt tendency to ſcepticiſm not to be apprehenſive, that we have here got quite beyond the reach of our faculties. So long as we confine our ſpeculations to trade, or morals, or politics, or criticiſm, we make appeals, every moment, to common ſenſe and experience, which ſtrengthen our philoſophical concluſions, and remove (at leaſt, in part) the ſuſpicion which we ſo juſtly entertain with regard to every reaſoning that is very ſubtile and refined. But, in theological reaſonings, we have not this advantage; while at the ſame time we are employed upon objects, which, we muſt be ſenſible, are too large for our graſp, and of all others, require moſt to be familiariſed to our apprehenſion. We are like foreigners in a ſtrange country, to whom every thing muſt ſeem ſuſpicious, and who are in danger every moment of tranſgreſſing againſt the laws and cuſtoms of the people with whom they live and converſe. We know not how far we ought to truſt our vulgar methods of reaſoning in ſuch a ſubject; ſince even in common life,

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and in that province which is peculiarly appropriated to them, we cannot account for them, and are entirely guided by a kind of inſtinct or neceſſity in employing them.

All ſceptics pretend, that, if reaſon be conſidered in an abſtract view, it furniſhes invincible arguments againſt itſelf; and that we could never retain any conviction or aſſurance, on any ſubject, were not the ſceptical reaſonings ſo refined and ſubtile, that they are not able to counterpoiſe the more ſolid and more natural arguments derived from the ſenſes and experience. But it is evident, whenever our arguments loſe this advantage, and run wide of common life, that the moſt refined ſcepticiſm comes to be upon a footing with them, and is able to oppoſe and counterbalance them. The one has no more weight than the other. The mind muſt remain in ſuſpenſe between them; and it is that very ſuſpenſe or balance, which is the triumph of ſcepticiſm.

But I obſerve, ſays Cleanthes, with regard to you, Philo, and all ſpeculative ſceptics, that your doctrine and practice are as much at variance in the moſt abſtruſe points of theory as in the conduct of common life. Wherever evidence diſcovers itſelf, you adhere to it, notwithſtanding your pretended ſcepticiſm; and I can obſerve, too, ſome of your ſect to be as deciſive as thoſe who make

greater

greater profeſſions of certainty and aſſurance. In reality, would not a man be ridiculous, who pretended to reject NEWTON's explication of the wonderful phenomenon of the rainbow, becauſe that explication gives a minute anatomy of the rays of light; a ſubject, forſooth, too refined for human comprehenſion? And what would you ſay to one, who having nothing particular to object to the arguments of COPERNICUS and GALILÆO for the motion of the earth, ſhould withhold his aſſent, on that general principle, That theſe ſubjects were too magnificent and remote to be explained by the narrow and fallacious reaſon of mankind.

THERE is indeed a kind of brutiſh and ignorant ſcepticiſm, as you well obſerved, which gives the vulgar a general prejudice againſt what they do not eaſily underſtand, and makes them reject every principle which requires elaborate reaſoning to prove and eſtabliſh it. This ſpecies of ſcepticiſm is fatal to knowledge, not to religion; ſince we find, that thoſe who make greateſt profeſſion of it, give often their aſſent, not only to the great truths of Theiſm and natural theology, but even to the moſt abſurd tenets which a traditional ſuperſtition has recommended to them. They firmly believe in witches; though they will not believe nor attend to the moſt ſimple propoſition of EUCLID. But the refined and philoſophical ſceptics fall into an inconſiſtence

of an oppoſite nature. They puſh their reſearches into the moſt abſtruſe corners of ſcience; and their aſſent attends them in every ſtep, proportioned to the evidence which they meet with. They are even obliged to acknowledge, that the moſt abſtruſe and remote objects are thoſe which are beſt explained by philoſophy. Light is in reality anatomized: the true ſyſtem of the heavenly bodies is diſcovered and aſcertained. But the nouriſhment of bodies by food is ſtill an inexplicable myſtery: the coheſion of the parts of matter is ſtill incomprehenſible. Theſe ſceptics, therefore, are obliged, in every queſtion to conſider each particular evidence apart, and proportion their aſſent to the preciſe degree of evidence which occurs. This is their practice in all natural, mathematical, moral, and political ſcience. And why not the ſame, I aſk, in the theological and religious? Why muſt concluſions of this nature be alone rejected on the general preſumption of the inſufficiency of human reaſon, without any particular diſcuſſion of the evidence? Is not ſuch an unequal conduct a plain proof of prejudice and paſſion?

Our ſenſes, you ſay, are fallacious; our underſtanding erroneous; our ideas even of the moſt familiar objects, extenſion, duration, motion, full of abſurdities and contradictions. You defy me to ſolve the difficulties, or reconcile the repugnancies, which you diſcover in them. I have not capacity for ſo great an under-

undertaking: I have not leiſure for it: I perceive it to be ſuperfluous. Your own conduct, in every circumſtance, refutes your principles; and ſhows the firmeſt reliance on all the received maxims of ſcience, morals, prudence, and behaviour.

I SHALL never aſſent to ſo harſh an opinion as that of a celebrated writer *, who ſays, that the ſceptics are not a ſect of philoſophers: They are only a ſect of liars. I may, however, affirm, (I hope, without offence) that they are a ſet of jeſters or railers. But for my part, whenever I find myſelf diſpoſed to mirth and amuſement, I ſhall certainly chuſe my entertainment of a leſs perplexing and abſtruſe nature. A comedy, a novel, or at moſt a hiſtory, ſeems a more natural recreation than ſuch metaphyſical ſubtilties and abſtractions.

IN vain would the ſceptic make a diſtinction between ſcience and common life, or between one ſcience and another. The arguments employed in all, if juſt, are of a ſimilar nature, and contain the ſame force and evidence. Or if there be any difference among them, the advantage lies entirely on the ſide of theology and natural religion. Many principles of mechanics are founded on very abſtruſe reaſoning; yet no man who has any pretenſions to ſcience, even no ſpeculative

* L'art de penſer.

ſceptic, pretends to entertain the leaſt doubt with regard to them. The COPERNICAN ſyſtem contains the moſt ſurpriſing paradox, and the moſt contrary to our natural conceptions, to appearances, and to our very ſenſes: yet even monks and inquiſitors are now conſtrained to withdraw their oppoſition to it. And ſhall PHILO, a man of ſo liberal a genius, and extenſive knowledge, entertain any general undiſtinguiſhed ſcruples with regard to the religious hypotheſis, which is founded on the ſimpleſt and moſt obvious arguments, and unleſs it meets with artificial obſtacles, has ſuch eaſy acceſs and admiſſion into the mind of man?

AND here we may obſerve, continued he, turning himſelf towards DEMEA, a pretty curious circumſtance in the hiſtory of the ſciences. After the union of philoſophy with the popular religion, upon the firſt eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, nothing was more uſual, among all religious teachers, than declamations againſt reaſon, againſt the ſenſes, againſt every principle derived merely from human reſearch and inquiry. All the topics of the ancient Academics were adopted by the Fathers; and thence propagated for ſeveral ages in every ſchool and pulpit throughout Chriſtendom. The Reformers embraced the ſame principles of reaſoning, or rather declamation; and all panegyrics on the excellency of faith were ſure to be interlarded with ſome ſevere ſtrokes of ſatire againſt

againſt natural reaſon. A celebrated prelate too *, of the Romiſh communion, a man of the moſt extenſive learning, who wrote a demonſtration of Chriſtianity, has alſo compoſed a treatiſe, which contains all the cavils of the boldeſt and moſt determined PYRRHONISM. LOCKE ſeems to have been the firſt Chriſtian, who ventured openly to aſſert, that *faith* was nothing but a ſpecies of *reaſon*; that religion was only a branch of philoſophy; and that a chain of arguments, ſimilar to that which eſtabliſhed any truth in morals, politics, or phyſics, was always employed in diſcovering all the principles of theology, natural and revealed. The ill uſe which BAYLE and other libertines made of the philoſophical ſcepticiſm of the fathers and firſt reformers, ſtill farther propagated the judicious ſentiment of Mr. LOCKE; and it is now, in a manner, avowed, by all pretenders to reaſoning and philoſophy, that Atheiſt and Sceptic are almoſt ſynonymous. And as it is certain, that no man is in earneſt when he profeſſes the latter principle; I would fain hope, that there are as few who ſeriouſly maintain the former.

DON'T you remember, ſaid PHILO, the excellent ſaying of Lord BACON on this head? That a little philoſophy, replied CLEANTHES, makes a man an Atheiſt: a great deal converts him to religion. That is a very judicious remark too, ſaid PHILO. But what I have in my eye

* Monſ. HUET.

eye is another paſſage, where, having mentioned DAVID's fool, who ſaid in his heart there is no God, this great philoſopher obſerves, that the Atheiſts now-a-days have a double ſhare of folly: for they are not contented to ſay in their hearts there is no God, but they alſo utter that impiety with their lips: and are thereby guilty of multiplied indiſcretion and imprudence. Such people, though they were ever ſo much in earneſt, cannot, methinks, be very formidable.

BUT though you ſhould rank me in this claſs of fools, I cannot forbear communicating a remark that occurs to me from the hiſtory of the religious and irreligious ſcepticiſm with which you have entertained us. It appears to me that there are ſtrong ſymptoms of prieſtcraft in the whole progreſs of this affair. During ignorant ages, ſuch as thoſe which followed the diſſolution of the ancient ſchools, the prieſts perceived, that Atheiſm, Deiſm, or hereſy of any kind, could only proceed from the preſumptuous queſtioning of received opinions, and from a belief that human reaſon was equal to every thing. Education had then a mighty influence over the minds of men, and was almoſt equal in force to thoſe ſuggeſtions of the ſenſes and common underſtanding, by which the moſt determined ſceptic muſt allow himſelf to be governed. But at preſent, when the influence of education is much diminiſhed, and men, from a more open commerce of the world,

world, have learned to compare the popular principles of different nations and ages, our sagacious divines have changed their whole system of philosophy, and talk the language of STOICS, PLATONISTS, and PERIPATETICS, not that of PYRRHONIANS and ACADEMICS. If we distrust human reason, we have now no other principle to lead us into religion. Thus, sceptics in one age, dogmatists in another; whichever system best suits the purpose of these reverend gentlemen, in giving them an ascendant over mankind, they are sure to make it their favourite principle, and established tenet.

IT is very natural, said CLEANTHES, for men to embrace those principles, by which they find they can best defend their doctrines; nor need we have any recourse to priestcraft to account for so reasonable an expedient. And surely nothing can afford a stronger presumption, that any set of principles are true and ought to be embraced, than to observe that they tend to the confirmation of true religion, and serve to confound the cavils of Atheists, Libertines, and Freethinkers of all denominations.

PART

PART II.

I MUST own, CLEANTHES, ſaid DEMEA, that nothing can more ſurpriſe me, than the light in which you have all along put this argument. By the whole tenor of your diſcourſe, one would imagine that you were maintaining the Being of a God, againſt the cavils of Atheiſts and Infidels; and were neceſſitated to become a champion for that fundamental principle of all religion. But this, I hope, is not, by any means, a queſtion among us. No man; no man, at leaſt, of common ſenſe, I am perſuaded, ever entertained a ſerious doubt with regard to a truth ſo certain and ſelf-evident. The queſtion is not concerning the BEING, but the NATURE, of GOD. This I affirm, from the infirmities of human underſtanding, to be altogether incomprehenſible and unknown to us. The eſſence of that Supreme Mind, his attributes, the manner of his exiſtence, the very nature of his duration; theſe, and every particular which regards ſo divine a Being, are myſterious to men. Finite, weak, and

blind

blind creatures, we ought to humble ourſelves in his auguſt preſence; and, conſcious of our frailties, adore in ſilence his infinite perfections, which eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive. They are covered in a deep cloud from human curioſity: It is profaneneſs to attempt penetrating thro' theſe ſacred obſcurities: And next to the impiety of denying his exiſtence, is the temerity of prying into his nature and eſſence, decrees and attributes.

But leſt you ſhould think, that my *piety* has here got the better of my *philoſophy*, I ſhall ſupport my opinion, if it needs any ſupport, by a very great authority. I might cite all the divines, almoſt, from the foundation of Chriſtianity, who have ever treated of this or any other theological ſubject: But I ſhall confine myſelf, at preſent, to one equally celebrated for piety and philoſophy. It is Father Malebranche, who, I remember, thus expreſſes himſelf *. "One ought not ſo much "(ſays he) to call God a ſpirit, in order to "expreſs poſitively what he is, as in order to "ſignify that he is not matter. He is a Being "infinitely perfect: Of this we cannot doubt. "But in the ſame manner as we ought not to "imagine, even ſuppoſing him corporeal, that "he is clothed with a human body, as the "Anthropomorphites aſſerted, under co-

"lour

* Recherche de la Verité, liv. 3. cap. 9.

"lour that that figure was the moſt perfect of "any; ſo neither ought we to imagine, that "the Spirit of God has human ideas, or bears "any reſemblance to our ſpirit; under colour "that we know nothing more perfect than a "human mind. We ought rather to believe, "that as he comprehends the perfections of "matter without being material ..... he "comprehends alſo the perfections of created "ſpirits, without being ſpirit, in the manner "we conceive ſpirit: that his true name is "*He that is*; or, in other words, Being with-"out reſtriction, All Being, the Being infinite "and univerſal."

AFTER ſo great an authority, DEMEA, replied PHILO, as that which you have produced, and a thouſand more which you might produce, it would appear ridiculous in me to add my ſentiment, or expreſs my approbation of your doctrine. But ſurely, where reaſonable men treat theſe ſubjects, the queſtion can never be concerning the *Being*, but only the *Nature*, of the Deity. The former truth, as you well obſerve, is unqueſtionable and ſelf-evident. Nothing exiſts without a cauſe; and the original cauſe of this univerſe (whatever it be) we call God; and piouſly aſcribe to him every ſpecies of perfection. Whoever ſcruples this fundamental truth, deſerves every puniſhment which can be inflicted among philoſophers, to wit, the greateſt ridicule, contempt, and diſapprobation. But as all perfection is entirely

entirely relative, we ought never to imagine that we comprehend the attributes of this divine Being, or to ſuppoſe that his perfections have any analogy or likeneſs to the perfections of a human creature. Wiſdom, Thought, Deſign, Knowledge; theſe we juſtly aſcribe to him; becauſe theſe words are honourable among men, and we have no other language or other conceptions by which we can expreſs our adoration of him. But let us beware, leſt we think, that our ideas any wiſe correſpond to his perfections, or that his attributes have any reſemblance to theſe qualities among men. He is infinitely ſuperior to our limited view and comprehenſion; and is more the object of worſhip in the temple, than of diſputation in the ſchools.

In reality, Cleanthes, continued he, there is no need of having recourſe to that affected ſcepticiſm, ſo diſpleaſing to you, in order to come at this determination. Our ideas reach no farther than our experience: we have no experience of divine attributes and operations: I need not conclude my ſyllogiſm: you can draw the inference yourſelf. And it is a pleaſure to me (and I hope to you too) that juſt reaſoning and ſound piety here concur in the ſame concluſion, and both of them eſtabliſh the adorably myſterious and incomprehenſible nature of the Supreme Being.

Not

NOT to loſe any time in circumlocutions, ſaid CLEANTHES, addreſſing himſelf to DEMEA, much leſs in replying to the pious declamations of PHILO; I ſhall briefly explain how I conceive this matter. Look round the world: contemplate the whole and every part of it: you will find it to be nothing but one great machine, ſubdivided into an infinite number of leſſer machines, which again admit of ſubdiviſions to a degree beyond what human ſenſes and faculties can trace and explain. All theſe various machines, and even their moſt minute parts, are adjuſted to each other with an accuracy, which raviſhes into admiration all men who have ever contemplated them. The curious adapting of means to ends, throughout all nature, reſembles exactly, though it much exceeds, the productions of human contrivance; of human deſign, thought, wiſdom, and intelligence. Since therefore the effects reſemble each other, we are led to infer, by all the rules of analogy, that the cauſes alſo reſemble; and that the Author of Nature is ſomewhat ſimilar to the mind of man; though poſſeſſed of much larger faculties, proportioned to the grandeur of the work which he has executed. By this argument *a poſteriori*, and by this argument alone, do we prove at once the exiſtence of a Deity, and his ſimilarity to human mind and intelligence.

I SHALL

I SHALL be ſo free, CLEANTHES, ſaid DEMEA, as to tell you, that from the beginning I could not approve of your concluſion concerning the ſimilarity of the Deity to men; ſtill leſs can I approve of the mediums by which you endeavour to eſtabliſh it. What! No demonſtration of the Being of God! No abſtract arguments! No proofs *a priori!* Are theſe, which have hitherto been ſo much inſiſted on by philoſophers, all fallacy, all ſophiſm? Can we reach no farther in this ſubject than experience and probability? I will not ſay, that this is betraying the cauſe of a Deity: But ſurely, by this affected candor, you give advantages to Atheiſts, which they never could obtain by the mere dint of argument and reaſoning.

WHAT I chiefly ſcruple in this ſubject, ſaid PHILO, is not ſo much that all religious arguments are by CLEANTHES reduced to experience, as that they appear not to be even the moſt certain and irrefragable of that inferior kind. That a ſtone will fall, that fire will burn, that the earth has ſolidity, we have obſerved a thouſand and a thouſand times; and when any new inſtance of this nature is preſented, we draw without heſitation the accuſtomed inference. The exact ſimilarity of the caſes gives us a perfect aſſurance of a ſimilar event; and a ſtronger evidence is never deſired nor ſought after. But wherever you depart, in the leaſt, from the ſimilarity

rity of the caſes, you diminiſh proportionably the evidence; and may at laſt bring it to a very weak *analogy*, which is confeſſedly liable to error and uncertainty. After having experienced the circulation of the blood in human creatures, we make no doubt that it takes place in TITIUS and MÆVIUS: but from its circulation in frogs and fiſhes, it is only a preſumption, though a ſtrong one, from analogy, that it takes place in men and other animals. The analogical reaſoning is much weaker, when we infer the circulation of the ſap in vegetables from our experience that the blood circulates in animals; and thoſe, who haſtily followed that imperfect analogy, are found, by more accurate experiments, to have been miſtaken.

IF we ſee a houſe, CLEANTHES, we conclude, with the greateſt certainty, that it had an architect or builder; becauſe this is preciſely that ſpecies of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that ſpecies of cauſe. But ſurely you will not affirm, that the univerſe bears ſuch a reſemblance to a houſe, that we can with the ſame certainty infer a ſimilar cauſe, or that the analogy is here entire and perfect. The diſſimilitude is ſo ſtriking, that the utmoſt you can here pretend to is a gueſs, a conjecture, a preſumption concerning a ſimilar cauſe; and how that pretenſion will be received in the world, I leave you to conſider.

It would ſurely be very ill received, replied CLEANTHES; and I ſhould be deſervedly blamed and deteſted, did I allow, that the proofs of a Deity amounted to no more than a gueſs or conjecture. But is the whole adjuſtment of means to ends in a houſe and in the univerſe ſo ſlight a reſemblance? The œconomy of final cauſes? The order, proportion, and arrangement of every part? Steps of a ſtair are plainly contrived, that human legs may uſe them in mounting; and this inference is certain and infallible. Human legs are alſo contrived for walking and mounting; and this inference, I allow, is not altogether ſo certain, becauſe of the diſſimilarity which you remark; but does it, therefore, deſerve the name only of preſumption or conjecture?

GOOD God! cried DEMEA, interrupting him, where are we? Zealous defenders of religion allow, that the proofs of a Deity fall ſhort of perfect evidence! And you, PHILO, on whoſe aſſiſtance I depended in proving the adorable myſteriouſneſs of the Divine Nature, do you aſſent to all theſe extravagant opinions of CLEANTHES? For what other name can I give them? Or why ſpare my cenſure, when ſuch principles are advanced, ſupported by ſuch an authority, before ſo young a man as PAMPHILUS?

YOU ſeem not to apprehend, replied PHILO, that I argue with CLEANTHES in his own way; and

and by ſhowing him the dangerous conſequences of his tenets, hope at laſt to reduce him to our opinion. But what ſticks moſt with you, I obſerve, is the repreſentation which CLEANTHES has made of the argument *a poſteriori*; and finding that that argument is likely to eſcape your hold and vaniſh into air, you think it ſo diſguiſed, that you can ſcarcely believe it to be ſet in its true light. Now, however much I may diſſent, in other reſpects, from the dangerous principles of CLEANTHES, I muſt allow, that he has fairly repreſented that argument; and I ſhall endeavour ſo to ſtate the matter to you, that you will entertain no farther ſcruples with regard to it.

WERE a man to abſtract from every thing which he knows or has ſeen, he would be altogether incapable, merely from his own ideas, to determine what kind of ſcene the univerſe muſt be, or to give the preference to one ſtate or ſituation of things above another. For as nothing which he clearly conceives could be eſteemed impoſſible or implying a contradiction, every chimera of his fancy would be upon an equal footing; nor could he aſſign any juſt reaſon, why he adheres to one idea or ſyſtem, and rejects the others which are equally poſſible.

AGAIN; after he opens his eyes, and contemplates the world as it really is, it would be impoſſible for him, at firſt, to aſſign the cauſe

of any one event, much leſs of the whole of things or of the univerſe. He might ſet his Fancy a rambling; and ſhe might bring him in an infinite variety of reports and repreſentations. Theſe would all be poſſible; but being all equally poſſible, he would never, of himſelf, give a ſatisfactory account for his preferring one of them to the reſt. Experience alone can point out to him the true cauſe of any phenomenon.

Now according to this method of reaſoning, DEMEA, it follows (and is, indeed, tacitly allowed by CLEANTHES himſelf), that order, arrangement, or the adjuſtment of final cauſes, is not, of itſelf, any proof of deſign; but only ſo far as it has been experienced to proceed from that principle. For aught we can know *a priori*, matter may contain the ſource or ſpring of order originally, within itſelf, as well as mind does; and there is no more difficulty in conceiving, that the ſeveral elements, from an internal unknown cauſe, may fall into the moſt exquiſite arrangement, than to conceive that their ideas, in the great, univerſal mind, from a like internal unknown cauſe, fall into that arrangement. The equal poſſibility of both theſe ſuppoſitions is allowed. But by experience we find, (according to CLEANTHES), that there is a difference between them. Throw ſeveral pieces of ſteel together, without ſhape or form; they will never arrange themſelves ſo as to compoſe a watch. Stone,

and

and mortar, and wood, without an architect, never erect a houſe. But the ideas in a human mind, we ſee, by an unknown, inexplicable œconomy, arrange themſelves ſo as to form the plan of a watch or houſe. Experience, therefore, proves, that there is an original principle of order in mind, not in matter. From ſimilar effects we infer ſimilar cauſes. The adjuſtment of means to ends is alike in the univerſe, as in a machine of human contrivance. The cauſes, therefore, muſt be reſembling.

I WAS from the beginning ſcandaliſed, I muſt own, with this reſemblance, which is aſſerted, between the Deity and human creatures; and muſt conceive it to imply ſuch a degradation of the Supreme Being as no ſound Theiſt could endure. With your aſſiſtance, therefore, DEMEA, I ſhall endeavour to defend what you juſtly call the adorable myſteriouſneſs of the Divine Nature, and ſhall refute this reaſoning of CLEANTHES; provided he allows, that I have made a fair repreſentation of it.

WHEN CLEANTHES had aſſented, PHILO, after a ſhort pauſe, proceeded in the following manner.

THAT all inferences, CLEANTHES, concerning fact, are founded on experience; and that all experimental reaſonings are founded on the

ſuppoſition, that ſimilar cauſes prove ſimilar effects, and ſimilar effects ſimilar cauſes; I ſhall not, at preſent, much diſpute with you. But obſerve, I intreat you, with what extreme caution all juſt reaſoners proceed in the transferring of experiments to ſimilar caſes. Unleſs the caſes be exactly ſimilar, they repoſe no perfect confidence in applying their paſt obſervation to any particular phenomenon. Every alteration of circumſtance occaſions a doubt concerning the event; and it requires new experiments to prove certainly, that the new circumſtances are of no moment or importance. A change in bulk, ſituation, arrangement, age, diſpoſition of the air, or ſurrounding bodies; any of theſe particulars may be attended with the moſt unexpected conſequences: and unleſs the objects be quite familiar to us, it is the higheſt temerity to expect with aſſurance, after any of theſe changes, an event ſimilar to that which before fell under our obſervation. The ſlow and deliberate ſteps of philoſophers, here, if any where, are diſtinguiſhed from the precipitate march of the vulgar, who, hurried on by the ſmalleſt ſimilitude, are incapable of all diſcernment or conſideration.

But can you think, Cleanthes, that your uſual phlegm and philoſophy have been preſerved in ſo wide a ſtep as you have taken, when you compared to the univerſe, houſes, ſhips, furniture, machines; and from their

ſimilarity

ſimilarity in ſome circumſtances inferred a ſimilarity in their cauſes? Thought, deſign, intelligence, ſuch as we diſcover in men and other animals, is no more than one of the ſprings and principles of the univerſe, as well as heat or cold, attraction or repulſion, and a hundred others, which fall under daily obſervation. It is an active cauſe, by which ſome particular parts of nature, we find, produce alterations on other parts. But can a concluſion, with any propriety, be transferred from parts to the whole? Does not the great diſproportion bar all compariſon and inference? From obſerving the growth of a hair, can we learn any thing concerning the generation of a man? Would the manner of a leaf's blowing, even though perfectly known, afford us any inſtruction concerning the vegetation of a tree?

But allowing that we were to take the *operations* of one part of nature upon another for the foundation of our judgment concerning the *origin* of the whole, (which never can be admitted); yet why ſelect ſo minute, ſo weak, ſo bounded a principle as the reaſon and deſign of animals is found to be upon this planet? What peculiar privilege has this little agitation of the brain which we call *thought*, that we muſt thus make it the model of the whole univerſe? Our partiality in our own favour does indeed preſent it on all occaſions; but ſound philoſophy ought carefully to guard againſt ſo natural an illuſion.

So

So far from admitting, continued PHILO, that the operation of a part can afford us any juſt concluſion concerning the origin of the whole, I will not allow any one part to form a rule for another part, if the latter be very remote from the former. Is there any reaſonable ground to conclude, that the inhabitants of other planets poſſeſs thought, intelligence, reaſon, or any thing ſimilar to theſe faculties in men? When nature has ſo extremely diverſified her manner of operation in this ſmall globe; can we imagine, that ſhe inceſſantly copies herſelf throughout ſo immenſe a univerſe? And if thought, as we may well ſuppoſe, be confined merely to this narrow corner, and has even there ſo limited a ſphere of action; with what propriety can we aſſign it for the original cauſe of all things? The narrow views of a peaſant, who makes his domeſtic œconomy the rule for the government of kingdoms, is in compariſon a pardonable ſophiſm.

BUT were we ever ſo much aſſured, that a thought and reaſon, reſembling the human, were to be found throughout the whole univerſe, and were its activity elſewhere vaſtly greater and more commanding than it appears in this globe; yet I cannot ſee, why the operations of a world conſtituted, arranged, adjuſted, can with any propriety be extended to a world, which is in its embryo-ſtate, and is advancing towards that conſtitution and arrangement. By obſervation, we know ſomewhat of

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the œconomy, action, and nouriſhment of a finiſhed animal; but we muſt transfer with great caution that obſervation to the growth of a fœtus in the womb, and ſtill more to the formation of an animalcule in the loins of its male parent. Nature, we find, even from our limited experience, poſſeſſes an infinite number of ſprings and principles, which inceſſantly diſcover themſelves on every change of her poſition and ſituation. And what new and unknown principles would actuate her in ſo new and unknown a ſituation as that of the formation of a univerſe, we cannot, without the utmoſt temerity, pretend to determine.

A VERY ſmall part of this great ſyſtem, during a very ſhort time, is very imperfectly diſcovered to us; and do we thence pronounce deciſively concerning the origin of the whole?

ADMIRABLE concluſion! Stone, wood, brick, iron, braſs, have not, at this time, in this minute globe of earth, an order or arrangement without human art and contrivance: therefore the univerſe could not originally attain its order and arrangement, without ſomething ſimilar to human art. But is a part of nature a rule for another part very wide of the former? Is it a rule for the whole? Is a very ſmall part a rule for the univerſe? Is nature in one ſituation, a certain rule for nature in another ſituation vaſtly different from the former?

AND

AND can you blame me, CLEANTHES, if I here imitate the prudent reſerve of SIMONIDES, who, according to the noted ſtory, being aſked by HIERO, *What God was?* deſired a day to think of it, and then two days more; and after that manner continually prolonged the term, without ever bringing in his definition or deſcription? Could you even blame me, if I had anſwered at firſt, *that I did not know*, and was ſenſible that this ſubject lay vaſtly beyond the reach of my faculties? You might cry out ſceptic and rallier, as much as you pleaſed; but having found, in ſo many other ſubjects much more familiar, the imperfections and even contradictions of human reaſon, I never ſhould expect any ſucceſs from its feeble conjectures, in a ſubject ſo ſublime, and ſo remote from the ſphere of our obſervation. When two *ſpecies* of objects have always been obſerved to be conjoined together, I can *infer*, by cuſtom, the exiſtence of one wherever I *ſee* the exiſtence of the other: and this I call an argument from experience. But how this argument can have place, where the objects, as in the preſent caſe, are ſingle, individual, without parallel, or ſpecific reſemblance, may be difficult to explain. And will any man tell me with a ſerious countenance, that an orderly univerſe muſt ariſe from ſome thought and art, like the human; becauſe we have experience of it? To aſcertain this reaſoning, it were requiſite, that we had experience of the origin of worlds; and it is not ſufficient, ſurely,

ly, that we have ſeen ſhips and cities ariſe from human art and contrivance.

PHILO was proceeding in this vehement manner, ſomewhat between jeſt and earneſt, as it appeared to me; when he obſerved ſome ſigns of impatience in CLEANTHES, and then immediately ſtopped ſhort. What I had to ſuggeſt, ſaid CLEANTHES, is only that you would not abuſe terms, or make uſe of popular expreſſions to ſubvert philoſophical reaſonings. You know, that the vulgar often diſtinguiſh reaſon from experience, even where the queſtion relates only to matter of fact and exiſtence; though it is found, where that *reaſon* is properly analyzed, that it is nothing but a ſpecies of experience. To prove by experience the origin of the univerſe from mind, is not more contrary to common ſpeech, than to prove the motion of the earth from the ſame principle. And a caviller might raiſe all the ſame objections to the COPERNICAN ſyſtem, which you have urged againſt my reaſonings. Have you other earths, might he ſay, which you have ſeen to move? Have .....

YES! cried PHILO, interrupting him, we have other earths. Is not the moon another earth, which we ſee to turn round its centre? Is not Venus another earth, where we obſerve the ſame phenomenon? Are not the revolutions of the ſun alſo a confirmation, from analogy, of the ſame theory? All the planets, are they

they not earths, which revolve about the ſun? Are not the ſatellites moons, which move round Jupiter and Saturn, and along with theſe primary planets round the ſun? Theſe analogies and reſemblances, with others which I have not mentioned, are the ſole proofs of the COPERNICAN ſyſtem: and to you it belongs to conſider, whether you have any analogies of the ſame kind to ſupport your theory.

IN reality, CLEANTHES, continued he, the modern ſyſtem of aſtronomy is now ſo much received by all inquirers, and has become ſo eſſential a part even of our earlieſt education, that we are not commonly very ſcrupulous in examining the reaſons upon which it is founded. It is now become a matter of mere curioſity to ſtudy the firſt writers on that ſubject, who had the full force of prejudice to encounter, and were obliged to turn their arguments on every ſide in order to render them popular and convincing. But if we peruſe GALILÆO's famous Dialogues concerning the ſyſtem of the world, we ſhall find, that that great genius, one of the ſublimeſt that ever exiſted, firſt bent all his endeavours to prove, that there was no foundation for the diſtinction commonly made between elementary and celeſtial ſubſtances. The ſchools, proceeding from the illuſions of ſenſe, had carried this diſtinction very far; and had eſtabliſhed the latter ſubſtances to be ingenerable, incorruptible, unalterable, impaſſible; and had aſſigned all the oppoſite qualities to

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the former. But GALILÆO, beginning with the moon, proved its ſimilarity in every particular to the earth; its convex figure, is natural darkneſs when not illuminated, its denſity, its diſtinction into ſolid and liquid, the variations of its phaſes, the mutual illuminations of the earth and moon, their mutual eclipſes, the inequalities of the lunar ſurface, &c. After many inſtances of this kind, with regard to all the planets, men plainly ſaw that theſe bodies became proper objects of experience; and that the ſimilarity of their nature enabled us to extend the ſame arguments and phenomena from one to the other.

IN this cautious proceeding of the aſtronomers, you may read your own condemnation, CLEANTHES; or rather may ſee, that the ſubject in which you are engaged exceeds all human reaſon and inquiry. Can you pretend to ſhew any ſuch ſimilarity between the fabric of a houſe, and the generation of a univerſe? Have you ever ſeen Nature in any ſuch ſituation as reſembles the firſt arrangement of the elements? Have worlds ever been formed under your eye; and have you had leiſure to obſerve the whole progreſs of the phenomenon, from the firſt appearance of order to its final conſummation? If you have, then cite your experience, and deliver your theory.

PART

PART III.

HOW the most absurd argument, replied CLEANTHES, in the hands of a man of ingenuity and intention, may acquire an air of probability! Are you not aware, PHILO, that it became necessary for COPERNICUS and his first disciples to prove the similarity of the terrestrial and celestial matter; because several philosophers, blinded by old systems, and supported by some sensible appearances, had denied this similarity? but that it is by no means necessary, that Theists should prove the similarity of the works of Nature to those of Art; because this similarity is self-evident and undeniable? The same matter, a like form: what more is requisite to show an analogy between their causes, and to ascertain the origin of all things from a divine purpose and intention? Your objections, I must freely tell you, are no better than the abstruse cavils on those philosophers who denied motion; and ought to be refuted in the same manner, by illustrations, examples, and instances, rather than by serious argument and philosophy.

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PART III.

HOW the moſt abſurd argument, replied CLEANTHES, in the hands of a man of ingenuity and invention, may acquire an air of probability! Are you not aware, PHILO, that it became neceſſary for COPERNICUS and his firſt diſciples to prove the ſimilarity of the terreſtrial and celeſtial matter; becauſe ſeveral philoſophers, blinded by old ſyſtems, and ſupported by ſome ſenſible appearances, had denied this ſimilarity? but that it is by no means neceſſary, that Theiſts ſhould prove the ſimilarity of the works of Nature to thoſe of Art; becauſe this ſimilarity is ſelf-evident and undeniable? The ſame matter, a like form: what more is requiſite to ſhow an analogy between their cauſes, and to aſcertain the origin of all things from a divine purpoſe and intention? Your objections, I muſt freely tell you, are no better than the abſtruſe cavils of thoſe philoſophers who denied motion; and ought to be refuted in the ſame manner, by illuſtrations, examples, and inſtances, rather than by ſerious argument and philoſophy.

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SUPPOSE, therefore, that an articulate voice were heard in the clouds, much louder and more melodious than any which human art could ever reach: ſuppoſe, that this voice were extended in the ſame inſtant over all nations, and ſpoke to each nation in its own language and dialect: ſuppoſe, that the words delivered not only contain a juſt ſenſe and meaning, but convey ſome inſtruction altogether worthy of a benevolent Being, ſuperior to mankind: could you poſſibly heſitate a moment concerning the cauſe of this voice? and muſt you not inſtantly aſcribe it to ſome deſign or purpoſe? Yet I cannot ſee but all the ſame objections (if they merit that appellation) which lie againſt the ſyſtem of Theiſm, may alſo be produced againſt this inference.

MIGHT you not ſay, that all concluſions concerning fact were founded on experience: that when we hear an articulate voice in the dark, and thence infer a man, it is only the reſemblance of the effects which leads us to conclude that there is a like reſemblance in the cauſe: but that this extraordinary voice, by its loudneſs, extent, and flexibility to all languages, bears ſo little analogy to any human voice, that we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe any analogy in their cauſes: and conſequently, that a rational, wiſe, coherent ſpeech proceeded, you knew not whence, from ſome accidental whiſtling of the winds, not from any divine reaſon or intelligence? You ſee clearly your own

own objections in these cavils; and I hope too, you see clearly, that they cannot possibly have more force in the one case than in the other.

But to bring the case still nearer the present one of the universe, I shall make two suppositions, which imply not any absurdity or impossibility. Suppose, that there is a natural, universal, invariable language, common to every individual of human race; and that books are natural productions, which perpetuate themselves in the same manner with animals and vegetables, by descent and propagation. Several expressions of our passions contain a universal language: all brute animals have a natural speech, which, however limited, is very intelligible to their own species. And as there are infinitely fewer parts and less contrivance in the finest composition of eloquence, than in the coarsest organized body, the propagation of an Iliad or Æneid is an easier supposition than that of any plant or animal.

Suppose, therefore, that you enter into your library, thus peopled by natural volumes, containing the most refined reason and most exquisite beauty: could you possibly open one of them, and doubt, that its original cause bore the strongest analogy to mind and intelligence? When it reasons and discourses; when it expostulates, argues, and enforces its views and topics; when it applies sometimes to the pure intellect, sometimes to the affections; when it collects, disposes, and adorns

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every conſideration ſuited to the ſubject: could you perſiſt in aſſerting, that all this, at the bottom, had really no meaning; and that the firſt formation of this volume in the loins of its original parent proceeded not from thought and deſign? Your obſtinacy, I know, reaches not that degree of firmneſs: even your ſceptical play and wantonneſs would be abaſhed at ſo glaring an abſurdity.

But if there be any difference, Philo, between this ſuppoſed caſe and the real one of the univerſe, it is all to the advantage of the latter. The anatomy of an animal affords many ſtronger inſtances of deſign than the peruſal of Livy or Tacitus: and any objection which you ſtart in the former caſe, by carrying me back to ſo unuſual and extraordinary a ſcene as the firſt formation of worlds, the ſame objection has place on the ſuppoſition of our vegetating library. Chuſe, then, your party, Philo, without ambiguity or evaſion: aſſert either that a rational volume is no proof of a rational cauſe, or admit of a ſimilar cauſe to all the works of nature.

Let me here obſerve too, continued Cleanthes, that this religious argument, inſtead of being weakened by that ſcepticiſm ſo much affected by you, rather acquires force from it, and becomes more firm and undiſputed. To exclude all argument or reaſoning of every kind, is either affectation or madneſs. The

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declared profeſſion of every reaſonable ſceptic is only to reject abſtruſe, remote, and refined arguments; to adhere to common ſenſe and the plain inſtincts of nature; and to aſſent, wherever any reaſons ſtrike him with ſo full a force, that he cannot, without the greateſt violence, prevent it. Now the arguments for natural religion are plainly of this kind; and nothing but the moſt perverſe, obſtinate metaphyſics can reject them. Conſider, anatomize the eye; ſurvey its ſtructure and contrivance; and tell me, from your own feeling, if the idea of a contriver does not immediately flow in upon you with a force like that of ſenſation. The moſt obvious concluſion, ſurely, is in favour of deſign; and it requires time, reflection, and ſtudy, to ſummon up thoſe frivolous, though abſtruſe objections, which can ſupport infidelity. Who can behold the male and female of each ſpecies, the correſpondence of their parts and inſtincts, their paſſions, and whole courſe of life before and after generation, but muſt be ſenſible, that the propagation of the ſpecies is intended by Nature? Millions and millions of ſuch inſtances preſent themſelves through every part of the univerſe; and no language can convey a more intelligible, irreſiſtible meaning, than the curious adjuſtment of final cauſes. To what degree, therefore, of blind dogmatiſm muſt one have attained, to reject ſuch natural and ſuch convincing arguments?

Some beauties in writing we may meet with, which ſeem contrary to rules, and which gain the affections, and animate the imagination, in oppoſition to all the precepts of criticiſm, and to the authority of the eſtabliſhed maſters of art. And if the argument for Theiſm be, as you pretend, contradictory to the principles of of logic; its univerſal, it irreſiſtible influence proves clearly, that there may be arguments of a like irregular nature. Whatever cavils may be urged; an orderly world, as well as a coherent, articulate ſpeech, will ſtill be received as an inconteſtable proof of deſign and intention.

It ſometimes happens, I own, that the religious arguments have not their due influence on an ignorant ſavage and barbarian; not becauſe they are obſcure and difficult, but becauſe he never aſks himſelf any queſtion with regard to them. Whence ariſes the curious ſtructure of an animal? From the copulation of its parents. And theſe whence? From *their* parents? A few removes ſet the objects at ſuch a diſtance, that to him they are loſt in darkneſs and confuſion; nor is he actuated by any curioſity to trace them farther. But this is neither dogmatiſm nor ſcepticiſm, but ſtupidity; a ſtate of mind very different from your ſifting, inquiſitive diſpoſition, my ingenious friend. You can trace cauſes from effects: You can compare the moſt diſtant and remote objects; and your greateſt errors proceed not from barrenneſs of thought and invention; but

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from too luxuriant a fertility, which ſuppreſſes your natural good ſenſe, by a profuſion of unneceſſary ſcruples and objections.

HERE I could obſerve, HERMIPPUS, that PHILO was a little embarraſſed and confounded: but while he heſitated in delivering an anſwer, luckily for him, DEMEA broke in upon the diſcourſe, and ſaved his countenance.

YOUR inſtance, CLEANTHES, ſaid he, drawn from books and language, being familiar, has, I confeſs, ſo much more force on that account: but is there not ſome danger too in this very circumſtance; and may it not render us preſumptuous, by making us imagine we comprehend the Deity, and have ſome adequate idea of his nature and attributes? When I read a volume, I enter into the mind and intention of the author: I become him, in a manner, for the inſtant; and have an immediate feeling and conception of thoſe ideas which revolved in his imagination while employed in that compoſition. But ſo near an approach we never ſurely can make to the Deity. His ways are not our ways. His attributes are perfect, but incomprehenſible. And this volume of Nature contains a great and inexplicable riddle, more than any intelligible diſcourſe or reaſoning.

THE ancient PLATONISTS, you know, were the moſt religious and devout of all the Pagan philoſophers: yet many of them, particularly

PLOTINUS, expreſsly declare, that intellect or underſtanding is not to be aſcribed to the Deity; and that our moſt perfect worſhip of him conſiſts, not in acts of veneration, reverence, gratitude, or love; but in a certain myſterious ſelf-annihilation, or total extinction of all our faculties. Theſe ideas are, perhaps, too far ſtretched; but ſtill it muſt be acknowledged, that, by repreſenting the Deity as ſo intelligible and comprehenſible, and ſo ſimilar to a human mind, we are guilty of the groſſeſt and moſt narrow partiality, and make ourſelves the model of the whole univerſe.

ALL the *ſentiments* of the human mind, gratitude, reſentment, love, friendſhip, approbation, blame, pity, emulation, envy, have a plain reference to the ſtate and ſituation of man, and are calculated for preſerving the exiſtence and promoting the activity of ſuch a being in ſuch circumſtances. It ſeems therefore unreaſonable to transfer ſuch ſentiments to a ſupreme exiſtence, or to ſuppoſe him actuated by them; and the phænomena, beſides, of the univerſe will not ſupport us in ſuch a theory. All our *ideas* derived from the ſenſes are confeſſedly falſe and illuſive; and cannot, therefore, be ſuppoſed to have place in a ſupreme intelligence: and as the ideas of internal ſentiment, added to thoſe of the external ſenſes, compoſe the whole furniture of human underſtanding, we may conclude, that none of the *materials* of thought are in any reſpect ſimilar in the human

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and in the divine intelligence. Now as to the *manner* of thinking; how can we make any compariſon between them, or ſuppoſe them any wiſe reſembling? Our thought is fluctuating, uncertain, fleeting, ſucceſſive, and compounded; and were we to remove theſe circumſtances, we abſolutely annihilate its eſſence, and it would in ſuch a caſe be an abuſe of terms to apply to it the name of thought or reaſon. At leaſt, if it appear more pious and reſpectful (as it really is) ſtill to retain theſe terms, when we mention the Supreme Being; we ought to acknowledge, that their meaning, in that caſe, is totally incomprehenſible; and that the infirmities of our nature do not permit us to reach any ideas which in the leaſt correſpond to the ineffable ſublimity of the divine attributes.

PART

PART IV.

IT ſeems ſtrange to me, ſaid CLEANTHES, that you, DEMEA, who are ſo ſincere in the cauſe of religion, ſhould ſtill maintain the myſterious, incomprehenſible nature of the Deity, and ſhould inſiſt ſo ſtrenuouſly that he has no manner of likeneſs or reſemblance to human creatures. The Deity, I can readily allow, poſſeſſes many powers and attributes, of which we can have no comprehenſion: but if our ideas, ſo far as they go, be not juſt, and adequate, and correſpondent to his real nature, I know not what there is in this ſubject worth inſiſting on. Is the name, without any meaning, of ſuch mighty importance? Or how do you MYSTICS, who maintain the abſolute incomprehenſibility of the Deity, differ from Sceptics or Atheiſts, who aſſert, that the firſt cauſe of all is unknown and unintelligible? Their temerity muſt be very great, if, after rejecting the production by a mind: I mean, a mind reſembling the human, (for I know of no other), they pretend to aſſign, with certainty, any other ſpecific intelligible cauſe: And

And their conſcience muſt be very ſcrupulous indeed, if they refuſe to call the univerſal, unknown cauſe a God or Deity; and to beſtow on him as many ſublime eulogies and unmeaning epithets, as you ſhall pleaſe to require of them.

WHO could imagine, replied DEMEA, that CLEANTHES, the calm, philoſophical CLEANTHES, would attempt to refute his antagoniſts, by affixing a nick-name to them; and, like the common bigots and inquiſitors of the age, have recourſe to invective and declamation, inſtead of reaſoning? Or does he not perceive, that theſe topics are eaſily retorted, and that ANTHROPOMORPHITE is an appellation as invidious, and implies as dangerous conſequences, as the epithet of MYSTIC, with which he has honoured us? In reality, CLEANTHES, what it is you aſſert when you repreſent the Deity as ſimilar to a human mind and underſtanding. What is the ſoul of man? A compoſition of various faculties, paſſions, ſentiments, ideas; united, indeed, into one ſelf or perſon, but ſtill diſtinct from each other. When it reaſons, the ideas, which are the parts of its diſcourſe, arrange themſelves in a certain form or order; which is not preſerved entire for a moment, but immediately gives place to another arrangement. New opinions, new paſſions, new affections, new feelings ariſe, which continually diverſify the mental ſcene, and produce in it the greateſt variety and moſt rapid ſucceſſion imaginable.

ginable. How is this compatible with that perfect immutability and ſimplicity which all true Theiſts aſcribe to the Deity? By the ſame act, ſay they, he ſees paſt, preſent, and future: his love and hatred, his mercy and juſtice, are one individual operation: he is entire in every point of ſpace; and complete in every inſtant of duration. No ſucceſſion, no change, no acquiſition, no diminution. What he is implies not in it any ſhadow of diſtinction or diverſity. And what he is, this moment, he ever has been, and ever will be, without any new judgment, ſentiment, or operation. He ſtands fixed in one ſimple, perfect ſtate: nor can you ever ſay, with any propriety, that this act of his is different from that other; or that this judgment or idea has been lately formed, and will give place, by ſucceſſion to any different judgment or idea.

I CAN readily allow, ſaid CLEANTHES, that thoſe who maintain the perfect ſimplicity of the Supreme Being to the extent in which you have explained it, are complete MYSTICS, and chargeable with all the conſequences which I have drawn from their opinion. They are, in a word, ATHEISTS, without knowing it. For though it be allowed, that the Deity poſſeſſes attributes of which we have no comprehenſion; yet ought we never to aſcribe to him any attributes which are abſolutely incompatible with that intelligible nature eſſential to him. A mind, whoſe acts and ſentiments and ideas

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are not distinct and successive; one, that is wholly simple, and totally immutable; is a mind, which has no thought, no reason, no will, no sentiment, no love, no hatred; or in a word, is no mind at all. It is an abuse of terms to give it that appellation; and we may as well speak of limited extension without figure, or of number without composition.

PRAY consider, said PHILO, whom you are at present inveighing against. You are honouring with the appellation of *Atheist* all the sound, orthodox divines, almost, who have treated of this subject; and you will at last be, yourself, found, according to your reckoning, the only sound Theist in the world. But if idolaters be Atheists, as, I think, may justly be asserted, and Christian Theologians the same; what becomes of the argument, so much celebrated, derived from the universal consent of mankind?

BUT because I know you are not much swayed by names and authorities, I shall endeavour to show you, a little more distinctly, the inconveniencies of that Anthropomorphism, which you have embraced; and shall prove, that there is no ground to suppose a plan of the world to be formed in the divine mind, consisting of distinct ideas, differently arranged; in the same manner as an architect forms in his head the plan of a house which he intends to execute.

It is not eaſy I own, to ſee what is gained by this ſuppoſition, whether we judge of the matter by *Reaſon* or by *Experience*. We are ſtill obliged to mount higher, in order to find the cauſe of this cauſe, which you had aſſigned as ſatisfactory and concluſive.

If *Reaſon* (I mean abſtract reaſon, derived from inquiries *a priori*) be not alike mute with regard to all queſtions concerning cauſe and effect; this ſentence at leaſt it will venture to pronounce, That a mental world, or univerſe of ideas, requires a cauſe as much, as does a material world, or univerſe of objects; and if ſimilar in its arrangement, muſt require a ſimilar cauſe. For what is there in this ſubject, which ſhould occaſion a different concluſion or inference? In an abſtract view, they are entirely alike; and no difficulty attends the one ſuppoſition, which is not common to both of them.

Again, when we will needs force *Experience* to pronounce ſome ſentence, even on theſe ſubjects, which lie beyond her ſphere; neither can ſhe perceive any material difference in this particular, between theſe two kinds of worlds; but finds them to be governed by ſimilar principles, and to depend upon an equal variety of cauſes in their operations. We have ſpecimens in miniature of both of them. Our own mind reſembles the one: a vegetable or animal body the other. Let experi-

experience, therefore, judge from theſe ſamples. Nothing ſeems more delicate, with regard to its cauſes, than thought; and as theſe cauſes never operate in two perſons after the ſame manner, ſo we never find two perſons who think exactly alike. Nor indeed does the ſame perſon think exactly alike at any two different periods of time. A difference of age, of the diſpoſition of his body, of weather, of food, of company, of books, of paſſions; any of theſe particulars, or others more minute, are ſufficient to alter the curious machinery of thought, and communicate it to very different movements and operations. As far as we can judge, vegetables and animal bodies are not more delicate in their motions, nor depend upon a greater variety or more curious adjuſtment of ſprings and principles.

How therefore ſhall we ſatisfy ourſelves concerning the cauſe of that Being, whom you ſuppoſe the Author of Nature, or according to your ſyſtem of Anthropomorphiſm, the ideal world, into which you trace the material? Have we not the ſame reaſon to trace that ideal world, into another ideal world, or new intelligent principle? But if we ſtop, and go no farther; why go ſo far? Why not ſtop at the material world? How can we ſatisfy ourſelves without going on *in infinitum?* And after all, what ſatisfaction is there in that infinite progreſſion? Let us

remember

remember the ſtory of the INDIAN philoſopher and his elephant. It was never more applicable than to the preſent ſubject. If the material world reſts upon a ſimilar ideal world, this ideal world muſt reſt upon ſome other; and ſo one, without end. It were better, therefore, never to look beyond the preſent material world. By ſuppoſing it to contain the principle of its order within itſelf, we really aſſert it to be God; and the ſooner we arrive at that divine Being, ſo much the better. When you go one ſtep beyond the mundane ſyſtem, you only excite an inquiſitive humour, which it is impoſſible ever to ſatisfy.

To ſay, that the different ideas, which compoſe the reaſon of the Supreme Being, fall into order, of themſelves, and by their own nature, is really to talk without any preciſe meaning. If it has a meaning, I would fain know, why it is not as good ſenſe to ſay, that the parts of the material world fall into order, of themſelves, and by their own nature. Can the one opinion be intelligible, while the other is not ſo?

WE have, indeed, experience of ideas, which fall into order, of themſelves, and without any *known* cauſe: But, I am ſure, we have a much larger experience of matter, which does the ſame; as in all inſtances of generation and vegetation, where the accurate analyſis of the

the cauſe exceeds all human comprehenſion. We have alſo experience of particular ſyſtems of thought and of matter, which have no order: of the firſt, in madneſs; of the ſecond, in corruption. Why then ſhould we think, that order is more eſſential to one than the other? And if it requires a cauſe in both, what do we gain by your ſyſtem, in tracing the univerſe of objects into a ſimilar univerſe of ideas? The firſt ſtep, which we make, leads us on for ever. It were, therefore, wiſe in us, to limit all our inquiries to the preſent world, without looking farther. No ſatisfaction can ever be attained by theſe ſpeculations, which ſo far exceed the narrow bounds of human underſtanding.

IT was uſual with the PERIPATETICS, you know, CLEANTHES, when the cauſe of any phenomenon was demanded, to have recourſe to their *faculties*, or *occult qualities*; and to ſay, for inſtance, that bread nouriſhed by its nutritive faculty, and ſenna purged by its purgative; but it has been diſcovered, that this ſubterfuge was nothing but the diſguiſe of ignorance; and that theſe philoſophers, though leſs ingenuous, really ſaid the ſame thing with the ſceptics or the vulgar, who fairly confeſſed, that they knew not the cauſe of theſe phenomena. In like manner, when it is aſked, what cauſe produces order in the ideas of the Supreme Being; can any other reaſon be aſſigned by you Anthropomorphites, than that it is a

rational

rational faculty, and that ſuch is the nature of the Deity? But why a ſimilar anſwer will not be equally ſatisfactory in accounting for the order of the world, without having recourſe to any ſuch intelligent creator as you inſiſt on, may be difficult to determine. It is only to ſay, that *ſuch* is the nature of material objects, and that they are all originally poſſeſſed of a *faculty* of order and proportion. Theſe are only more learned and elaborate ways of confeſſing our ignorance; nor has the one hypotheſis any real advantage above the other, except in its greater conformity to vulgar prejudices.

You have diſplayed this argument with great emphaſis, replied CLEANTHES: you ſeem not ſenſible, how eaſy it is to anſwer it. Even in common life, if I aſſign a cauſe for any event; is it any objection, PHILO, that I cannot aſſign the cauſe of that cauſe, and anſwer every new queſtion which may inceſſantly be ſtarted? And what philoſophers could poſſibly ſubmit to ſo rigid a rule? philoſophers, who confeſs ultimate cauſes to be totally unknown; and are ſenſible, that the moſt refined principles, into which they trace the phenomena, are ſtill to them as inexplicable as theſe phenomena themſelves are to the vulgar. The order and arrangement of nature, the curious adjuſtment of final cauſes, the plain uſe and intention of every part and organ;

organ; all theſe beſpeak in the cleareſt language an intelligent cauſe or author. The heavens and the earth join in the ſame teſtimony: the whole chorus of Nature raiſes one hymn to the praiſes of its Creator: You alone, or almoſt alone, diſturb this general harmony. You ſtart abſtruſe doubts, cavils, and objections: You aſk me, what is the cauſe of this cauſe? I know not; I care not; that concerns not me. I have found a Deity; and here I ſtop my inquiry. Let thoſe go farther, who are wiſer or more enterpriſing.

I PRETEND to be neither, replied PHILO: and for that very reaſon, I ſhould never perhaps have attempted to go ſo far; eſpecially when I am ſenſible, that I muſt at laſt be contented to ſit down with the ſame anſwer, which, without farther trouble, might have ſatisfied me from the beginning. If I am ſtill to remain in utter ignorance of cauſes, and can abſolutely give an explication of nothing, I ſhall never eſteem it any advantage to ſhove off for a moment a difficulty, which you acknowledge, muſt, immediately, in its full force, recur upon me. Naturaliſts indeed very juſtly explain particular effects by more general cauſes; though theſe general cauſes themſelves ſhould remain in the end totally inexplicable: but they never ſurely thought it ſatisfactory to explain a particular effect by a particular cauſe,

which

which was no more to be accounted for than the effect itself. An ideal system, arranged of itself, without a precedent design, is not a whit more explicable than a material one, which attains its order in a like manner; nor is there any more difficulty in the latter supposition than in the former.

PART V.

BUT to ſhow you ſtill more inconveniencies, continued PHILO, in your Anthropomorphiſm; pleaſe to take a new ſurvey of your principles. *Like effects prove like cauſes.* This is the experimental argument; and this, you ſay too, is the ſole theological argument. Now it is certain, that the liker the effects are which are ſeen, and the liker the cauſes which are inferred, the ſtronger is the argument. Every departure on either ſide diminiſhes the probability, and renders the experiment leſs concluſive. You cannot doubt of the principle: neither ought you to reject its conſequences.

ALL the new diſcoveries in aſtronomy, which prove the immenſe grandeur and magnificence of the works of Nature, are ſo many additional arguments for a Deity, according to the true ſyſtem of Theiſm; but, according to your hypotheſis of experimental Theiſm, they become ſo many objections, by removing the effect ſtill farther from all reſemblance to the

effects of human art and contrivance. For if LUCRETIUS *, even following the old ſyſtem of the world, could exclaim,

> Quis regere immenſi ſummam, quis habere profundi
> Indu manu validas potis eſt moderanter habenas?
> Quis pariter cœlos omnes convertere? et omnes
> Ignibus ætheriis terras ſuffire feraces?
> Omnibus inque locis eſſe omni tempore præſto?

If TULLY † eſteemed this reaſoning ſo natural as to put it into the mouth of his EPICUREAN: *Quibus enim oculis animi intueri potuit veſter Plato fabricam illam tanti operis, qua conſtrui a Deo atque ædificari mundum facit? quæ molitio? quæ ferramenta? qui vectes? quæ machinæ? qui miniſtri tanti muneris fuerunt? quemadmodum autem obedire et parere voluntati architecti aer, ignis, aqua, terra potuerunt?* If this argument, I ſay, had any force in former ages; how much greater muſt it have at preſent; when the bounds of Nature are ſo infinitely enlarged, and ſuch a magnificent ſcene is opened to us? It is ſtill more unreaſonable to form our idea of ſo unlimited a cauſe from our experience of the narrow productions of human deſign and invention.

THE diſcoveries by microſcopes, as they open a new univerſe in miniature, are ſtill objections, according to you, arguments, according to me. The farther we puſh our reſearches of this kind, we are ſtill led to infer the univerſal

* Lib xi. 1094. † De nat. Deor. lib. i.

verſal cauſe of all to be vaſtly different from mankind, or from any object of human experience and obſervation.

AND what ſay you to the diſcoveries in anatomy, chemiſtry, botany?——Theſe ſurely are no objections, replied CLEANTHES: they only diſcover new inſtances of art and contrivance. It is ſtill the image of mind reflected on us from innumerable objects. Add, a mind *like the human*, ſaid PHILO. I know of no other, replied CLEANTHES. And the liker the better, inſiſted PHILO. To be ſure, ſaid CLEANTHES.

NOW, CLEANTHES, ſaid PHILO, with an air of alacrity and triumph, mark the conſequences. *Firſt*, By this method of reaſoning, you renounce all claim to infinity in any of the attributes of the Deity. For as the cauſe ought only to be proportioned to the effect; and the effect, ſo far as it falls under our cognizance, is not infinite; what pretenſions have we, upon your ſuppoſitions, to aſcribe that attribute to the divine Being? You will ſtill inſiſt, that, by removing him ſo much from all ſimilarity to human creatures, we give into the moſt arbitrary hypotheſis, and at the ſame time weaken all proofs of his exiſtence.

Secondly, You have no reaſon, on your theory, for aſcribing perfection to the Deity, even in his finite capacity; or for ſuppoſing him free from

from every error, miſtake, or incoherence, in his undertakings. There are many inexplicable difficulties in the works of Nature, which, if we allow a perfect author to be proved *a priori*, are eaſily ſolved, and become only ſeeming difficulties, from the narrow capacity of man, who cannot trace infinite relations. But according to your method of reaſoning, theſe difficulties become all real; and perhaps will be inſiſted on, as new inſtances of likeneſs to human art and contrivance. At leaſt, you muſt acknowledge, that it is impoſſible for us to tell, from our limited views, whether this ſyſtem contains any great faults, or deſerves any conſiderable praiſe, if compared to other poſſible, and even real ſyſtems. Could a peaſant, if the ÆNEID were read to him, pronounce that poem to be abſolutely faultleſs, or even aſſign to it its proper rank among the productions of human wit; he, who had never ſeen any other production?

BUT were this world ever ſo perfect a production, it muſt ſtill remain uncertain, whether all the excellencies of the work can juſtly be aſcribed to the workman. If we ſurvey a ſhip, what an exalted idea muſt we form of the ingenuity of the carpenter who framed ſo complicated, uſeful, and beautiful a machine? And what ſurpriſe muſt we feel, when we find him a ſtupid mechanic, who imitated others, and copied an art, which, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, after multiplied trials, miſtakes, corrections,

rections, deliberations, and controverſies, had been gradually improving? Many worlds might have been botched and bungled, throughout an eternity, ere this ſyſtem was ſtruck out; much labour loſt; many fruitleſs trials made; and a ſlow, but continued improvement carried on during infinite ages in the art of world-making. In ſuch ſubjects, who can determine, where the truth; nay, who can conjecture where the probability, lies; amidſt a great number of hypotheſes which may be propoſed, and a ſtill greater number which may be imagined?

And what ſhadow of an argument, continued Philo, can you produce, from your hypotheſis, to prove the unity of the Deity? A great number of men join in building a houſe or ſhip, in rearing a city, in framing a commonwealth: why may not ſeveral deities combine in contriving and framing a world? This is only ſo much greater ſimilarity to human affairs. By ſharing the work among ſeveral, we may ſo much farther limit the attributes of each, and get rid of that extenſive power and knowledge, which muſt be ſuppoſed in one deity, and which, according to you, can only ſerve to weaken the proof of his exiſtence. And if ſuch fooliſh, ſuch vicious creatures as man can yet often unite in framing and executing one plan; how much more thoſe deities or dæmons, whom we may ſuppoſe ſeveral degrees more perfect?

To

To multiply cauſes, without neceſſity, is indeed contrary to true philoſophy: but this principle applies not to the preſent caſe. Were one deity antecedently proved by your theory, who were poſſeſſed of every attribute requiſite to the production of the univerſe; it would be needleſs, I own, (though not abſurd), to ſuppoſe any other deity exiſtent. But while it is ſtill a queſtion, Whether all theſe attributes are united in one ſubject, or diſperſed among ſeveral independent beings; by what phenomena in nature can we pretend to decide the controverſy? Where we ſee a body raiſed in a ſcale, we are ſure that there is in the oppoſite ſcale, however concealed from ſight, ſome counterpoiſing weight equal to it: but it is ſtill allowed to doubt, whether that weight be an aggregate of ſeveral diſtinct bodies, or one uniform united maſs. And if the weight requiſite very much exceeds any thing which we have ever ſeen conjoined in any ſingle body, the former ſuppoſition becomes ſtill more probable and natural. An intelligent being of ſuch vaſt power and capacity as is neceſſary to produce the univerſe, or, to ſpeak in the language of ancient philoſophy, ſo prodigious an animal, exceeds all analogy, and even comprehenſion.

But farther, Cleanthes: Men are mortal, and renew their ſpecies by generation; and this is common to all living creatures. The two great ſexes of male and female, ſays Milton, animate the world. Why muſt this circumſtance,

cumſtance, ſo univerſal, ſo eſſential, be excluded from thoſe numerous and limited deities? Behold, then, the theogeny of ancient times brought back upon us.

And why not become a perfect Anthropomorphite? Why not aſſert the deity or deities to be corporeal, and to have eyes, a noſe, mouth, ears, &c.? Epicurus maintained, that no man had ever ſeen reaſon but in a human figure; therefore the gods muſt have a human figure. And this argument, which is deſervedly ſo much ridiculed by Cicero, becomes, according to you, ſolid and philoſophical.

In a word, Cleanthes, a man, who follows your hypotheſis, is able, perhaps, to aſſert, or conjecture, that the univerſe, ſometime, aroſe from ſomething like deſign: but beyond that poſition he cannot aſcertain one ſingle circumſtance; and is left afterwards to fix every point of his theology, by the utmoſt licenſe of fancy and hypotheſis. This world, for aught he knows, is very faulty and imperfect, compared to a ſuperior ſtandard; and was only the firſt rude eſſay of ſome infant deity, who afterwards abandoned it, aſhamed of his lame performance: it is the work only of ſome dependent, inferior deity; and is the object of deriſion to his ſuperiors: it is the production of old age and dotage in ſome ſuperannuated deity; and ever ſince his death, has run on at adventures, from the firſt impulſe and active force which it received

received from him. You juſtly give ſigns of horror, DEMEA, at theſe ſtrange ſuppoſitions; but theſe, and a thouſand more of the ſame kind, are CLEANTHES's ſuppoſitions, not mine. From the moment the attributes of the Deity are ſuppoſed finite, all theſe have place. And I cannot, for my part, think, that ſo wild and unſettled a ſyſtem of theology is, in any reſpect, preferable to none at all.

THESE ſuppoſitions I abſolutely diſown, cried CLEANTHES: they ſtrike me, however, with no horror; eſpecially, when propoſed in that rambling way in which they drop from you. On the contrary, they give me pleaſure, when I ſee, that, by the utmoſt indulgence of your imagination, you never get rid of the hypotheſis of deſign in the univerſe; but are obliged at every turn to have recourſe to it. To this conceſſion I adhere ſteadily; and this I regard as a ſufficient foundation for religion.

PART

PART VI.

IT muſt be a ſlight fabric, indeed, ſaid DEMEA, which can be erected on ſo tottering a foundation. While we are uncertain, whether there is one deity or many; whether the deity or deities, to whom we owe our exiſtence, be perfect or imperfect, ſubordinate or ſupreme, dead or alive; What truſt or confidence can we repoſe in them? What devotion or worſhip addreſs to them? What veneration or obedience pay them? To all the purpoſes of life, the theory of religion becomes altogether uſeleſs: and even with regard to ſpeculative conſequences, its uncertainty, according to you, muſt render it totally precarious and unſatisfactory.

To render it ſtill more unſatisfactory, ſaid PHILO, there occurs to me another hypotheſis, which muſt acquire an air of probability from the method of reaſoning ſo much inſiſted on by CLEANTHES. That like effects ariſe from like cauſes: this principle he ſuppoſes the foundation

dation of all religion. But there is another principle of the ſame kind, no leſs certain, and derived from the ſame ſource of experience; That where ſeveral known circumſtances are obſerved to be ſimilar, the unknown will alſo be found ſimilar. Thus, if we ſee the limbs of a human body, we conclude, that it is alſo attended with a human head, though hid from us. Thus, it we ſee, through a chink in a wall, a ſmall part of the ſun, we conclude, that, were the wall removed, we ſhould ſee the whole body. In ſhort, this method of reaſoning is ſo obvious and familiar, that no ſcruple can ever be made with regard to its ſolidity.

Now if we ſurvey the univerſe, ſo far as it falls under our knowledge, it bears a great reſemblance to an animal or organized body, and ſeems actuated with a like principle of life and motion. A continual circulation of matter in it produces no diſorder: a continual waſte in every part is inceſſantly repaired: the cloſeſt ſympathy is perceived throughout the entire ſyſtem: and each part or member, in performing its proper offices, operates both to its own preſervation and to that of the whole. The world, therefore, I infer, is an animal; and the Deity is the SOUL of the world, actuating it, and actuated by it.

You have too much learning, CLEANTHES, to be at all ſurpriſed at this opinion, which, you know, was maintained by almoſt all the Theiſts

Theiſts of antiquity, and chiefly prevails in their diſcourſes and reaſonings. For though ſometimes the ancient philoſophers reaſon from final cauſes, as if they thought the world the workmanſhip of God; yet it appears rather their favourite notion to conſider it as his body, whoſe organization renders it ſubſervient to him. And it muſt be confeſſed, that as the univerſe reſembles more a human body than it does the works of human art and contrivance; if our limited analogy could ever, with any propriety, be extended to the whole of nature, the inference ſeems juſter in favour of the ancient than the modern theory.

THERE are many other advantages, too, in the former theory, which recommended it to the ancient Theologians. Nothing more repugnant to all their notions, becauſe nothing more repugnant to common experience, than mind without body; a mere ſpiritual ſubſtance, which fell not under their ſenſes nor comprehenſion, and of which they had not obſerved one ſingle inſtance throughout all nature. Mind and body they knew, becauſe they felt both: an order, arrangement, organization, or internal machinery, in both, they likewiſe knew, after the ſame manner: and it could not but ſeem reaſonable to transfer this experience to the univerſe; and to ſuppoſe the divine mind and body to be alſo coeval, and to have, both of them, order and arrangement naturally inherent in them, and inſeparable from them.

HERE,

HERE, therefore, is a new ſpecies of *Anthropomorphiſm*, CLEANTHES, on which you may deliberate; and a theory which ſeems not liable to any conſiderable difficulties. You are too much ſuperior, ſurely, to *ſyſtematical prejudices*, to find any more difficulty in ſuppoſing an animal body to be, originally, of itſelf, or from unknown cauſes, poſſeſſed of order and organization, than in ſuppoſing a ſimilar order to belong to mind. But the *vulgar prejudice*, that body and mind ought always to accompany each other, ought not, one ſhould think, to be entirely neglected; ſince it is founded on *vulgar experience*, the only guide which you profeſs to follow in all theſe theological inquiries. And if you aſſert, that our limited experience is an unequal ſtandard, by which to judge of the unlimited extent of Nature; you entirely abandon your own hypotheſis, and muſt thenceforward adopt our Myſticiſm, as you call it, and admit of the abſolute incomprehenſibility of the Divine Nature.

THIS theory, I own, replied CLEANTHES, has never before occurred to me, though a pretty natural one; and I cannot readily, upon ſo ſhort an examination and reflection, deliver any opinion with regard to it. You are very ſcrupulous, indeed, ſaid PHILO: were I to examine any ſyſtem of yours, I ſhould not have acted with half that caution and reſerve, in ſtarting objections and difficulties to it. However,

ever, if any thing occur to you, you will oblige us by propoſing it.

WHY then, replied CLEANTHES, it ſeems to me, that, though the world does, in many circumſtances, reſemble an animal body; yet is the analogy alſo defective in many circumſtances, the moſt material: no organs of ſenſe; no ſeat of thought or reaſon; no one preciſe origin of motion and action. In ſhort, it ſeems to bear a ſtronger reſemblance to a vegetable than to an animal, and your inference would be ſo far inconcluſive in favour of the ſoul of the world.

BUT in the next place, your theory ſeems to imply the eternity of the world; and that is a principle, which I think, can be refuted by the ſtrongeſt reaſons and probabilities. I ſhall ſuggeſt an argument to this purpoſe, which, I believe, has not been inſiſted on by any writer. Thoſe, who reaſon from the late origin of arts and ſciences, though their inference wants not force, may perhaps be refuted by conſiderations derived from the nature of human ſociety, which is in continual revolution, between ignorance and knowledge, liberty and ſlavery, riches and poverty; ſo that it is impoſſible for us, from our limited experience, to foretell with aſſurance what events may or may not be expected. Ancient learning and hiſtory ſeem to have been in great danger of entirely periſhing after the inundation of the barbarous nations;

nations; and had theſe convulſions continued a little longer, or been a little more violent, we ſhould not probably have now known what paſſed in the world a few centuries before us. Nay, were it not for the ſuperſtition of the Popes, who preſerved a little jargon of LATIN, in order to ſupport the appearance of an ancient and univerſal church, that tongue muſt have been utterly loſt: in which caſe, the Weſtern world, being totally barbarous, would not have been in a fit diſpoſition for receiving the GREEK language and learning, which was conveyed to them after the ſacking of CONSTANTINOPLE. When learning and books had been extinguiſhed, even the mechanical arts would have fallen conſiderably to decay; and it is eaſily imagined, that fable or tradition might aſcribe to them a much later origin than the true one. This vulgar argument, therefore, againſt the eternity of the world, ſeems a little precarious.

BUT here appears to be the foundation of a better argument. LUCULLUS was the firſt that brought cherry-trees from ASIA to EUROPE; though that tree thrives ſo well in many EUROPEAN climates, that it grows in the woods without any culture. Is it poſſible, that, throughout a whole eternity, no EUROPEAN had ever paſſed into ASIA, and thought of tranſplanting ſo delicious a fruit into his own country? Or if the tree was once tranſplanted and propagated, how could it ever afterwards periſh?

riſh? Empires may riſe and fall; liberty and ſlavery ſucceed alternately; ignorance and knowledge give place to each other; but the cherry-tree will ſtill remain in the woods of GREECE, SPAIN, and ITALY, and will never be affected by the revolutions of human ſociety.

IT is not two thouſand years ſince vines were tranſplanted into FRANCE; though there is no climate in the world more favourable to them. It is not three centuries ſince horſes, cows, ſheep, ſwine, dogs, corn, were known in AMERICA. Is it poſſible, that, during the revolutions of a whole eternity, there never aroſe a COLUMBUS, who might open the communication between EUROPE and that continent? We may as well imagine, that all men would wear ſtockings for ten thouſand years, and never have the ſenſe to think of garters to tie them. All theſe ſeem convincing proofs of the youth, or rather infancy, of the world; as being founded on the operation of principles more conſtant and ſteady than thoſe by which human ſociety is governed and directed. Nothing leſs than a total convulſion of the elements will ever deſtroy all the EUROPEAN animals and vegetables which are now to be found in the Weſtern world.

AND what argument have you againſt ſuch convulſions, replied PHILO. Strong and almoſt inconteſtable proofs may be traced over the whole earth, that every part of this globe has

continued for many ages entirely covered with water. And though order were ſuppoſed inſeparable from matter, and inherent in it; yet may matters be ſuſceptible of many and great revolutions, through the endleſs periods of eternal duration. The inceſſant changes, to which every part of it is ſubject, ſeem to intimate ſome ſuch general transformations; tho' at the ſame time it is obſervable, that all the changes and corruptions of which we have ever had experience, are but paſſages from one ſtate of order to another; nor can matter ever reſt in total deformity and confuſion. What we ſee in the parts, we may infer in the whole; at leaſt, that is the method of reaſoning on which you reſt your whole theory. And were I obliged to defend any particular ſyſtem of this nature (which I never willingly ſhould do), I eſteem none more plauſible than that which aſcribes an eternal inherent principle of order to the world; though attended with great and continual revolutions and alterations. This at once ſolves all difficulties; and if the ſolution, by being ſo general, is not entirely complete and ſatisfactory, it is at leaſt a theory that we muſt, ſooner or later, have recourſe to, whatever ſyſtem we embrace. How could things have been as they are, were there not an original, inherent principle of order ſomewhere, in thought or in matter? And it is very indifferent to which of theſe we give the preference. Chance has no place, on any hypotheſis, ſceptical or religious. Every thing is ſurely governed

ed by ſteady, inviolable laws. And were the inmoſt eſſence of things laid open to us, we ſhould then diſcover a ſcene, of which, at preſent, we can have no idea. Inſtead of admiring the order of natural beings, we ſhould clearly ſee, that it was abſolutely impoſſible for them, in the ſmalleſt article, ever to admit of any other diſpoſition.

WERE any one inclined to revive the ancient Pagan Theology, which maintained, as we learn from Heſiod, that this globe was governed by 30,000 deities, who aroſe from the unknown powers of nature: you would naturally object, CLEANTHES, that nothing is gained by this hypotheſis; and that it is as eaſy to ſuppoſe all men and animals, beings more numerous, but leſs perfect, to have ſprung immediately from a like origin. Puſh the ſame inference a ſtep farther; and you will find a numerous ſociety of deities as explicable as one univerſal deity, who poſſeſſes, within himſelf, the powers and perfections of the whole ſociety. All theſe ſyſtems, then, of Scepticiſm, Polytheiſm, and Theiſm, you muſt allow, on your principles, to be on a like footing, and that no one of them has any advantage over the others. You may thence learn the fallacy of your principles.

PART VII.

BUT here, continued PHILO, in examining the ancient ſyſtem of the ſoul of the world, there ſtrikes me, all on a ſudden, a new idea, which, if juſt, muſt go near to ſubvert all your reaſoning, and deſtroy even your firſt inferences, on which you repoſe ſuch confidence. If the univerſe bears a greater likeneſs to animal bodies and to vegetables, than to the works of human art, it is more probable, that its cauſe reſembles the cauſe of the former than that of the latter, and its origin ought rather to be aſcribed to generation or vegetation than to reaſon or deſign. Your concluſion, even according to your own principles, is therefore lame and defective.

PRAY open up this argument a little farther, ſaid DEMEA. For I do not rightly apprehend it, in that conciſe manner in which you have expreſſed it.

OUR friend CLEANTHES, replied PHILO, as you have heard, aſſerts, that ſince no queſtion of

of fact can be proved otherwiſe than by experience, the exiſtence of a Deity admits not of proof from any other medium. The world, ſays he, reſembles the works of human contrivance: therefore its cauſe muſt alſo reſemble that of the other. Here we may remark, that the operation of one very ſmall part of nature, to wit man, upon another very ſmall part, to wit that inanimate matter lying within his reach, is the rule by which CLEANTHES judges of the origin of the whole; and he meaſures objects, ſo widely diſproportioned, by the ſame individual ſtandard. But to wave all objections drawn from this topic; I affirm that there are other parts of the univerſe (beſides the machines of human invention) which bear ſtill a greater reſemblance to the fabric of the world, and which therefore afford a better conjecture concerning the univerſal origin of this ſyſtem. Theſe parts are animals and vegetables. The world plainly reſembles more an animal or a vegetable, than it does a watch or a knitting-loom. Its cauſe, therefore, it is more probable, reſembles the cauſe of the former. The cauſe of the former is generation or vegetation. The cauſe, therefore, of the world, we may infer to be ſomething ſimilar or analogous to generation or vegetation.

BUT how is it conceivable, ſaid DEMEA, that the world can ariſe from any thing ſimilar to vegetation or generation?

VERY

VERY eaſily, replied PHILO. In like manner as a tree ſheds its ſeed into the neighbouring fields, and produces other trees; ſo the great vegetable, the world, or this planetary ſyſtem, produces within itſelf certain ſeeds, which, being ſcattered into the ſurrounding chaos, vegetate into new worlds. A comet, for inſtance, is the ſeed of a world; and after it has been fully ripened, by paſſing from ſun to ſun, and ſtar to ſtar, it is at laſt toſſed into the unformed elements which every where ſurround this univerſe, and immediately ſprouts up into a new ſyſtem.

OR if, for the ſake of variety (for I ſee no other advantage), we ſhould ſuppoſe this world to be an animal; a comet is the egg of this animal: and in like manner as an oſtrich lays its egg in the ſand, which, without any farther care, hatches the egg, and produces a new animal; ſo ..... I underſtand you, ſays DEMEA: but what wild, arbitrary ſuppoſitions are theſe? What *data* have you for ſuch extraordinary concluſions? And is the ſlight, imaginary reſemblance of the world to a vegetable or an animal ſufficient to eſtabliſh the ſame inference with regard to both? Objects, which are in general ſo widely different; ought they to be a ſtandard for each other?

RIGHT, cries PHILO: this is the topic on which I have all along inſiſted. I have ſtill aſſerted, that we have no *data* to eſtabliſh any

ſyſtem

ſyſtem of coſmogony. Our experience, ſo imperfect in itſelf, and ſo limited both in extent and duration, can afford us no probable conjecture concerning the whole of things. But if we muſt needs fix on ſome hypotheſis; by what rule, pray, ought we to determine our choice? Is there any other rule than the greater ſimilarity of the objects compared? And does not a plant or an animal, which ſprings from vegetation or generation, bear a ſtronger reſemblance to the world, than does any artificial machine, which ariſes from reaſon and deſign?

But what is this vegetation and generation of which you talk, ſaid Demea? Can you explain their operations, and anatomize that fine internal ſtructure on which they depend?

As much, at leaſt, replied Philo, as Cleanthes can explain the operations of reaſon, or anatomize that internal ſtructure on which *it* depends. But without any ſuch elaborate diſquiſitions, when I ſee an animal, I infer, that it ſprang from generation; and that with as great certainty as you conclude a houſe to have been reared by deſign. Theſe words, *generation*, *reaſon*, mark only certain powers and energies in nature, whoſe effects are known, but whoſe eſſence is incomprehenſible; and one of theſe principles, more than the other, has no privilege for being made a ſtandard to the whole of nature.

In reality, Demea, it may reaſonably be expected, that the larger the views are which we take of things, the better will they conduct us in our concluſions concerning ſuch extraordinary and ſuch magnificent ſubjects. In this little corner of the world alone, there are four principles, *Reaſon*, *Inſtinct*, *Generation*, *Vegetation*, which are ſimilar to each other, and are the cauſes of ſimilar effects. What a number of other principles may we naturally ſuppoſe in the immenſe extent and variety of the univerſe, could we travel from planet to planet and from ſyſtem to ſyſtem, in order to examine each part of this mighty fabric? Any one of theſe four principles above mentioned (and a hundred others, which lie open to our conjecture) may afford us a theory, by which to judge of the origin of the world; and it is a palpable and egregious partiality, to confine our view entirely to that principle by which our own minds operate. Were this principle more intelligible on that account, ſuch a partiality might be ſomewhat excuſeable: but reaſon, in its internal fabric and ſtructure, is really as little known to us as inſtinct or vegetation; and perhaps even that vague, undeterminate word, *Nature*, to which the vulgar refer every thing, is not at the bottom more inexplicable. The effects of theſe principles are all known to us from experience: but the principles themſelves, and their manner of operation, are totally unknown: nor is it leſs intelligible, or leſs conformable to experience, to ſay, that the world aroſe by vegetation

getation from a ſeed ſhed by another world, than to ſay that it aroſe from a divine reaſon or contrivance, according to the ſenſe in which CLEANTHES underſtands it.

BUT methinks, ſaid DEMEA, if the world had a vegetative quality, and could ſow the ſeeds of new worlds into the infinite chaos, this power would be ſtill an additional argument for deſign in its author. For whence could ariſe ſo wonderful a faculty but from deſign? Or how can order ſpring from any thing which perceives not that order which it beſtows?

YOU need only look around you, replied PHILO, to ſatisfy yourſelf with regard to this queſtion. A tree beſtows order and organization on that tree which ſprings from it, without knowing the order: an animal, in the ſame manner, on its offspring; a bird, on its neſt: and inſtances of this kind are even more frequent in the world, than thoſe of order, which ariſe from reaſon and contrivance. To ſay that all this order in animals and vegetables proceeds ultimately from deſign, is begging the queſtion: nor can that great point be aſcertained otherwiſe than by proving, *a priori*, both that order is, from its nature, inſeparably attached to thought; and that it can never, of itſelf, or from original unknown principles, belong to matter.

BUT

BUT farther, DEMEA; this objection, which you urge, can never be made uſe of by CLEANTHES, without renouncing a defence which he has already made againſt one of my objections. When I inquired concerning the cauſe of that ſupreme reaſon and intelligence, into which he reſolves every thing; he told me, that the impoſſibility of ſatisfying ſuch inquiries could never be admitted as an objection in any ſpecies of philoſophy. *We muſt ſtop ſomewhere*, ſays he; *nor is it ever within the reach of human capacity to explain ultimate cauſes, or ſhow the laſt connections of any objects. It is ſufficient, if the ſteps ſo far as we go, are ſupported by experience and obſervation.* Now, that vegetation and generation, as well as reaſon, are experienced to be principles of order and nature, is undeniable. If I reſt my ſyſtem of coſmogony on the former preferably to the latter, it is at my choice. The matter ſeems entirely arbitrary. And when CLEANTHES aſks me what is the cauſe of my great vegetative or generative faculty, I am equally intitled to aſk him the cauſe of his great reaſoning principle. Theſe queſtions we have agreed to forbear on both ſides; and it is chiefly his intereſt on the preſent occaſion to ſtick to this agreement. Judging by our limited and imperfect experience, generation has ſome privileges above reaſon: for we ſee every day the latter ariſe from the former, never the former from the latter.

COM-

COMPARE, I beſeech you, the conſequences on both ſides. The world, ſay I, reſembles an animal; therefore it is an animal, therefore it aroſe from generation. The ſteps, I confeſs, are wide; yet there is ſome ſmall appearance of analogy in each ſtep. The world, ſays CLEANTHES, reſembles a machine; therefore it is a machine, therefore it aroſe from deſign. The ſteps here are equally wide, and the analogy leſs ſtriking. And if he pretends to carry on *my* hypotheſis a ſtep farther, and to infer deſign or reaſon from the great principle of generation, on which I inſiſt; I may, with better authority, uſe the ſame freedom to puſh farther *his* hypotheſis, and infer a divine generation or theogeny from his principle of reaſon. I have at leaſt ſome faint ſhadow of experience, which is the utmoſt that can ever be attained in the preſent ſubject. Reaſon, in innumerable inſtances, is obſerved to ariſe from the principle of generation, and never to ariſe from any other principle.

HESIOD, and all the ancient Mythologiſts, were ſo ſtruck with this analogy, that they univerſally explained the origin of nature from an animal birth, and copulation. PLATO too, ſo far as he is intelligible, ſeems to have adopted ſome ſuch notion in his TIMÆUS.

THE BRAMINS aſſert, that the world aroſe from an infinite ſpider, who ſpun this whole complicated maſs from his bowels, and annihilates

lates afterwards the whole or any part of it, by abſorbing it again, and reſolving it into his own eſſence. Here is a ſpecies of coſmogony, which appears to us ridiculous; becauſe a ſpider is a little contemptible animal, whoſe operations we are never likely to take for a model of the whole univerſe. But ſtill here is a new ſpecies of analogy, even in our globe. And were there a planet wholly inhabited by ſpiders, (which is very poſſible), this inference would there appear as natural and irrefragable as that which in our planet aſcribes the origin of all things to deſign and intelligence, as explained by CLEANTHES. Why an orderly ſyſtem may not be ſpun from the belly as well as from the brain, it will be difficult for him to give a ſatisfactory reaſon.

I MUST confeſs, PHILO, replied CLEANTHES, that of all men living, the taſk which you have undertaken, of raiſing doubts and objections, ſuits you beſt, and ſeems, in a manner, natural and unavoidable to you. So great is your fertility of invention, that I am not aſhamed to acknowledge myſelf unable, on a ſudden, to ſolve regularly ſuch out-of-the-way difficulties as you inceſſantly ſtart upon me: though I clearly ſee, in general, their fallacy and error. And I queſtion not, but you are yourſelf, at preſent, in the ſame caſe, and have not the ſolution ſo ready as the objection: while you muſt be ſenſible, that common ſenſe and reaſon are entirely againſt you; and that ſuch whimſies as you have delivered, may puzzle, but never can convince us.

PART

PART VIII.

WHAT you aſcribe to the fertility of my invention, replied PHILO, is entirely owing to the nature of the ſubject. In ſubjects, adapted to the narrow compaſs of human reaſon, there is commonly but one determination, which carries probability or conviction with it; and to a man of ſound judgment, all other ſuppoſitions, but that one, appear entirely abſurd and chimerical. But in ſuch queſtions as the preſent, a hundred contradictory views may preſerve a kind of imperfect analogy; and invention has here full ſcope to exert itſelf. Without any great effort of thought, I believe that I could in an inſtant, propoſe other ſyſtems of coſmogony, which would have ſome faint appearance of truth; though it is a thouſand, a million to one, if either yours or any one of mine be the true ſyſtem.

FOR inſtance; what if I ſhould revive the old EPICUREAN hypotheſis? This is commonly, and I believe juſtly, eſteemed the moſt abſurd

ſurd ſyſtem that has yet been propoſed; yet, I know not, whether, with a few alterations, it might not be brought to bear a faint appearance of probability. Inſtead of ſuppoſing matter infinite, as EPICURUS did; let us ſuppoſe it finite. A finite number of particles is only ſuſceptible of finite tranſpoſitions: and it muſt happen, in an eternal duration, that every poſſible order or poſition muſt be tried an infinite number of times. This world, therefore, with all its events, even the moſt minute, has before been produced and deſtroyed, and will again be produced and deſtroyed, without any bounds and limitations. No one, who has a conception of the powers of infinite, in compariſon of finite, will ever ſcruple this determination.

BUT this ſuppoſes, ſaid DEMEA, that matter can acquire motion, without any voluntary agent or firſt mover.

AND where is the difficulty, replied PHILO, of that ſuppoſition? Every event, before experience, is equally difficult and incomprehenſible; and every event, after experience, is equally eaſy and intelligible. Motion, in many inſtances, from gravity, from elaſticity, from electricity, begins in matter, without any known voluntary agent: and to ſuppoſe always, in theſe caſes, an unknown voluntary agent, is mere hypotheſis; and hypotheſis attended with no advantages. The beginning of motion in

matter

matter itſelf is as conceivable *a priori* as its communication from mind and intelligence.

BESIDES; why may not motion have been propagated by impulſe through all eternity; and the ſame ſtock of it, or nearly the ſame, be ſtill upheld in the univerſe? As much as is loſt by the compoſition of motion, as much is gained by its reſolution. And whatever the cauſes are, the fact is certain, that matter is, and always has been, in continual agitation, as far as human experience or tradition reaches. There is not probably, at preſent, in the whole univerſe, one particle of matter at abſolute reſt.

AND this very conſideration too, continued PHILO, which we have ſtumbled on in the courſe of the argument, ſuggeſts a new hypotheſis of coſmogony, that is not abſolutely abſurd and improbable. Is there a ſyſtem, an order, an œconomy of things, by which matter can preſerve that perpetual agitation which ſeems eſſential to it, and yet maintain a conſtancy in the forms which it produces? There certainly is ſuch an œconomy: for this is actually the caſe with the preſent world. The continual motion of matter, therefore, in leſs than infinite tranſpoſitions, muſt produce this œconomy or order; and by its very nature, that order, when once eſtabliſhed, ſupports itſelf, for many ages, if not to eternity. But wherever matter is ſo poized, arranged, and ad-

juſted, as to continue in perpetual motion, and yet preſerve a conſtancy in the forms, its ſituation, muſt, of neceſſity, have all the ſame appearance of art and contrivance which we obſerve at preſent. All the parts of each form muſt have a relation to each other, and to the whole: and the whole itſelf muſt have a relation to the other parts of the univerſe; to the element, in which the form ſubſiſts; to the materials, with which it repairs its waſte and decay; and to every other form, which is hoſtile or friendly. A defect in any of theſe particulars deſtroys the form; and the matter, of which it is compoſed, is again ſet looſe, and is thrown into irregular motions and fermentations, till it unite itſelf to ſome other regular form. If no ſuch form be prepared to receive it, and if there be a great quantity of this corrupted matter in the univerſe, the univerſe itſelf is entirely diſordered; whether it be the feeble embryo of a world in its firſt beginnings that is thus deſtroyed, or the rotten carcaſe of one languiſhing in old age and infirmity. In either caſe, a chaos enſues; till finite, though innumerable revolutions produce at laſt ſome forms, whoſe parts and organs are ſo adjuſted as to ſupport the forms amidſt a continued ſucceſſion of matter.

Suppose, (for we ſhall endeavour to vary the expreſſion) that matter were thrown into any poſition, by a blind, unguided force; it is evident, that this firſt poſition muſt in all probability

bability be the moſt confuſed and moſt diſorderly imaginable, without any reſemblance to thoſe works of human contrivance, which, along with a ſymetry of parts, diſcover an adjuſtment of means to ends, and a tendency to ſelf-preſervation. If the actuating force ceaſe after this operation, matter muſt remain for ever in diſorder, and continue an immenſe chaos, without any proportion or activity. But ſuppoſe, that the actuating force, whatever it be, ſtill continues in matter, this firſt poſition will immediately give place to a ſecond, which will likewiſe in all probability be as diſorderly as the firſt, and ſo on through many ſucceſſions of changes and revolutions. No particular order or poſition ever continues a moment unaltered. The original force, ſtill remaining in activity, gives a perpetual reſtleſſneſs to matter. Every poſſible ſituation is produced, and inſtantly deſtroyed. If a glimpſe or dawn of order appears for a moment, it is inſtantly hurried away, and confounded, by that never-ceaſing force which actuates every part of matter.

THUS the univerſe goes on for many ages in a continued ſucceſſion of chaos and diſorder. But is it not poſſible that it may ſettle at laſt, ſo as not to loſe its motion and active force (for that we have ſuppoſed inherent in it), yet ſo as to preſerve an uniformity of appearance, amidſt the continual motion and fluctuation of its parts? This we find to be the caſe with the

univerſe at preſent. Every individual is perpetually changing, and every part of every individual; and yet the whole remains, in appearance, the ſame. May we not hope for ſuch a poſition, or rather be aſſured of it, from the eternal revolutions of unguided matter; and may not this account for all the appearing wiſdom and contrivance which is in the univerſe? Let us contemplate the ſubject a little, and we ſhall find, that this adjuſtment, if attained by matter, of a ſeeming ſtability in the forms, with a real and perpetual revolution or motion of parts, affords a plauſible, if not a true ſolution of the difficulty.

It is in vain, therefore, to inſiſt upon the uſes of the parts in animals or vegetables, and their curious adjuſtment to each other. I would fain know, how an animal could ſubſiſt unleſs its parts were ſo adjuſted? Do we not find, that it immediately periſhes whenever this adjuſtment ceaſes, and that its matter corrupting tries ſome new form? It happens, indeed, that the parts of the world are ſo well adjuſted, that ſome regular form immediately lays claim to this corrupted matter: and if it were not ſo, could the world ſubſiſt? Muſt it not diſſolve as well as the animal, and paſs through new poſitions and ſituations; till in a great, but finite ſucceſſion, it fall at laſt into the preſent or ſome ſuch order?

IT is well, replied CLEANTHES, you told us, that this hypotheſis was ſuggeſted on a ſudden, in the courſe of the argument. Had you had leiſure to examine it, you would ſoon have perceived the inſuperable objections to which it is expoſed. No form, you ſay, can ſubſiſt, unleſs it poſſeſs thoſe powers and organs requiſite for its ſubſiſtence: ſome new order or œconomy muſt be tried, and ſo on, without intermiſſion; till at laſt ſome order, which can ſupport and maintain itſelf, is fallen upon. But according to this hypotheſis, whence ariſe the many conveniencies and advantages which men and all animals poſſeſs? Two eyes, two ears, are not abſolutely neceſſary for the ſubſiſtence of the ſpecies. Human race might have been propagated and preſerved, without horſes, dogs, cows, ſheep, and thoſe innumerable fruits and products which ſerve to our ſatisfaction and enjoyment. If no camels had been created for the uſe of man in the ſandy deſerts of AFRICA and ARABIA, would the world have been diſſolved? If no loadſtone had been framed to give that wonderful and uſeful direction to the needle, would human ſociety and the human kind have been immediately extinguiſhed? Though the maxims of Nature be in general very frugal, yet inſtances of this kind are far from being rare; and any one of them is a ſufficient proof of deſign, and of a benevolent deſign, which gave riſe to the order and arrangement of the univerſe.

AT leaſt, you may ſafely infer, ſaid PHILO, that the foregoing hypotheſis is ſo far incomplete and imperfect; which I ſhall not ſcruple to allow. But can we ever reaſonably expect greater ſucceſs in any attempts of this nature? Or can we ever hope to erect a ſyſtem of coſmogony, that will be liable to no exceptions, and will contain no circumſtance repugnant to our limited and imperfect experience of the analogy of Nature? Your theory itſelf cannot ſurely pretend to any ſuch advantage; even though you have run into *Anthropomorphiſm*, the better to preſerve a conformity to common experience. Let us once more put it to trial. In all inſtances which we have ever ſeen, ideas are copied from real objects, and are ectypal, not archetypal, to expreſs myſelf in learned terms: You reverſe this order, and give thought the precedence. In all inſtances which we have ever ſeen, thought has no influence upon matter, except where that matter is ſo conjoined with it as to have an equal reciprocal influence upon it. No animal can move immediately any thing but the members of its own body; and indeed, the equality of action and re-action ſeems to be an univerſal law of Nature: but your theory implies a contradiction to this experience. Theſe inſtances, with many more, which it were eaſy to collect, (particularly the ſuppoſition of a mind or ſyſtem of thought that is eternal, or, in other words, an animal ingenerable and immortal); theſe inſtances,

inſtances, I ſay, may teach all of us ſobriety in condemning each other; and let us ſee, that as no ſyſtem of this kind ought ever to be received from a ſlight analogy, ſo neither ought any to be rejected on account of a ſmall incongruity. For that is an inconvenience from which we can juſtly pronounce no one to be exempted.

All religious ſyſtems, it is confeſſed, are ſubject to great and inſuperable difficulties. Each diſputant triumphs in his turn; while he carries on an offenſive war, and expoſes the abſurdities, barbarities, and pernicious tenets, of his antagoniſt. But all of them, on the whole, prepare a complete triumph for the *Sceptic*; who tells them, that no ſyſtem ought ever to be embraced with regard to ſuch ſubjects: for this plain reaſon, that no abſurdity ought ever to be aſſented to with regard to any ſubject. A total ſuſpenſe of judgment is here our only reaſonable reſource. And if every attack, as is commonly obſerved, and no defence, among Theologians, is ſucceſsful; how complete muſt be *his* victory, who remains always, with all mankind, on the offenſive, and has himſelf no fixed ſtation or abiding city, which he is ever, on any occaſion, obliged to defend?

PART

PART IX.

BUT if ſo many difficulties attend the argument *a poſteriori*, ſaid DEMEA; had we not better adhere to that ſimple and ſublime argument *a priori*, which, by offering to us infallible demonſtration, cuts off at once all doubt and difficulty? By this argument, too, we may prove the INFINITY of the divine attributes; which, I am afraid, can never be aſcertained with certainty from any other topic. For how can an effect, which either is finite, or, for aught we know, may be ſo; how can ſuch an effect, I ſay, prove an infinite cauſe? The unity too of the Divine Nature, it is very difficult, if not abſolutely impoſſible, to deduce merely from contemplating the works of nature; nor will the uniformity alone of the plan, even were it allowed, give us any aſſurance of that attribute. Whereas the argument *a priori*...

YOU ſeem to reaſon, DEMEA, interpoſed CLEANTHES, as if thoſe advantages and conveniencies in the abſtract argument were full proofs

proofs of its ſolidity. But it is firſt proper, in my opinion, to determine what argument of this nature you chooſe to inſiſt on; and we ſhall afterwards, from itſelf, better than from its *uſeful* conſequences, endeavour to determine what value we ought to put upon it.

THE argument, replied DEMEA, which I would inſiſt on, is the common one. Whatever exiſts, muſt have a cauſe or reaſon of its exiſtence; it being abſolutely impoſſible for any thing to produce itſelf, or be the cauſe of its own exiſtence. In mounting up, therefore, from effects to cauſes, we muſt either go on in tracing an infinite ſucceſſion, without any ultimate cauſe at all; or muſt at laſt have recourſe to ſome ultimate cauſe, that is *neceſſarily* exiſtent: Now that the firſt ſuppoſition is abſurd, may be thus proved. In the infinite chain or ſucceſſion of cauſes and effects, each ſingle effect is determined to exiſt by the power and efficacy of that cauſe which immediately preceded; but the whole eternal chain or ſucceſſion, taken together, is not determined or cauſed by any thing; and yet it is evident that it requires a cauſe or reaſon, as much as any particular object which begins to exiſt in time. The queſtion is ſtill reaſonable, Why this particular ſucceſſion of cauſes exiſted from eternity, and not any other ſucceſſion, or no ſucceſſion at all. If there be no neceſſarily-exiſtent being, any ſuppoſition which can be formed is equally poſſible; nor is there any more abſur-

abſurdity in Nothing's having exiſted from eternity, than there is in that ſucceſſion of cauſes which conſtitutes the univerſe. What was it, then, which determined Something to exiſt rather than Nothing, and beſtowed being on a particular poſſibility, excluſive of the reſt? *External cauſes*, there are ſuppoſed to be none. *Chance* is a word without a meaning. Was it *Nothing?* But that can never produce any thing. We muſt therefore, have recourſe, to a neceſſarily-exiſtent Being, who carries the REASON of his exiſtence in himſelf; and who cannot be ſuppoſed not to exiſt, without an expreſs contradiction. There is conſequently ſuch a Being; that is, there is a Deity.

I SHALL not leave it to PHILO, ſaid CLEANTHES, (though I know that the ſtarting objections is his chief delight) to point out the weakneſs of this metaphyſical reaſoning. It ſeems to me ſo obviouſly ill-grounded, and at the ſame time of ſo little conſequence to the cauſe of true piety and religion, that I ſhall myſelf venture to ſhow the fallacy of it.

I SHALL begin with obſerving, that there is an evident abſurdity in pretending to demonſtrate a matter of fact, or to prove it by any arguments *a priori*. Nothing is demonſtrable, unleſs the contrary implies a contradiction. Nothing, that is diſtinctly conceivable, implies a contradiction. Whatever we conceive as exiſtent, we can alſo conceive as non-exiſtent.

There

There is no being, therefore, whoſe non-exiſtence implies a contradiction. Conſequently there is no being, whoſe exiſtence is demonſtrable. I propoſe this argument as entirely deciſive, and am willing to reſt the whole controverſy upon it.

It is pretended that the Deity is a neceſſarily-exiſtent being; and this neceſſity of his exiſtence is attempted to be explained by aſſerting, that, if we knew his whole eſſence or nature, we ſhould perceive it to be as impoſſible for him not to exiſt as for twice two not to be four. But it is evident, that this can never happen, while our faculties remain the ſame as at preſent. It will ſtill be poſſible for us, at any time, to conceive the non-exiſtence of what we formerly conceived to exiſt; nor can the mind ever lie under a neceſſity of ſuppoſing any object to remain always in being; in the ſame manner as we lie under a neceſſity of always conceiving twice two to be four. The words, therefore, *neceſſary exiſtence*, have no meaning; or, which is the ſame thing, none that is conſiſtent.

But farther: Why may not the material univerſe be the neceſſarily-exiſtent Being, according to this pretended explication of neceſſity? We dare not affirm that we know all the qualities of matter; and for aught we can determine, it may contain ſome qualities, which, were they known, would make its non-exiſtence appear

appear as great a contradiction as that twice two is five. I find only one argument employed to prove, that the material world is not the neceſſarily-exiſtent Being; and this argument is derived from the contingency both of the matter and the form of the world. "Any particle of matter," it is ſaid *, "may be *conceived* "to be annihilated; and any form may be "*conceived* to be altered. Such an annihilation "or alteration, therefore, is not impoſſible." But it ſeems a great partiality not to perceive, that the ſame argument extends equally to the Deity, ſo far as we have any conception of him; and that the mind can at leaſt imagine him to be non-exiſtent, or his attributes to be altered. It muſt be ſome unknown, inconceivable qualities, which can make his non-exiſtence appear impoſſible, or his attributes unalterable: and no reaſon can be aſſigned, why theſe qualities may not belong to matter. As they are altogether unknown and inconceivable, they can never be proved incompatible with it.

ADD to this, that in tracing an eternal ſucceſſion of objects, it ſeems abſurd to inquire for a general cauſe or firſt author. How can any thing, that exiſts from eternity, have a cauſe; ſince that relation implies a priority in time, and a beginning of exiſtence?

IN

* DR. CLARKE.

In ſuch a chain, too, or ſucceſſion of object, each part is cauſed by that which preceded it, and cauſes that which ſucceeds it. Where then is the difficulty? But the WHOLE, you ſay, wants a cauſe. I anſwer, that the uniting of theſe parts into a whole, like the uniting of ſeveral diſtinct counties into one kingdom, or ſeveral diſtinct members into one body, is performed merely by an arbitrary act of the mind, and has no influence on the nature of things. Did I ſhow you the particular cauſes of each individual in a collection of twenty particles of matter, I ſhould think it very unreaſonable, ſhould you afterwards aſk me, what was the cauſe of the whole twenty. That is ſufficiently explained in explaining the cauſe of the parts.

Though the reaſonings which you have urged, Cleanthes, may well excuſe me, ſaid Philo, from ſtarting any farther difficulties; yet I cannot forbear inſiſting ſtill upon another topic. It is obſerved by arithmeticians, that the products of 9 compoſe always either 9, or ſome leſſer product of 9; if you add together all the characters, of which any of the former products is compoſed. Thus, of 18, 27, 36, which are products of 9, you make 9 by adding 1 to 8, 2 to 7, 3 to 6. Thus, of 369 is a product alſo of 9; and if you add 3, 6, and 9, you make 18, a leſſer product of 9 *. To a ſuperficial obſerver, ſo wonderful a regularity may be admired as the effect either of chance or

* Republique des Lettres, Aout, 1685.

or deſign: but a ſkilful algebraiſt immediately concludes it to be the work of neceſſity; and demonſtrates, that it muſt for ever reſult from the nature of theſe numbers. Is it not probable, I aſk, that the whole œconomy of the univerſe is conducted by a like neceſſity, though no human algebra can furniſh a key which ſolves the difficulty? And inſtead of admiring the order of natural beings, may it not happen, that, could we penetrate into the intimate nature of bodies, we ſhould clearly ſee why it was abſolutely impoſſible they could ever admit of any other diſpoſition? So dangerous is it to introduce this idea of neceſſity into the preſent queſtion! and ſo naturally does it afford an inference directly oppoſite to the religious hypotheſis!

But dropping all theſe abſtractions, continued Philo; and confining ourſelves to more familiar topics; I ſhall venture to add an obſervation, that the argument *a priori* has ſeldom been found very convincing, except to people of a metaphyſical head, who have accuſtomed themſelves to abſtract reaſoning, and who finding from mathematics, that the underſtanding frequently leads to truth, through obſcurity, and contrary to firſt appearances, have transferred the ſame habit of thinking to ſubjects where it ought not to have place. Other people, even of good ſenſe and the beſt inclined to religion, feel always ſome deficiency in ſuch argu-

arguments, though they are not perhaps able to explain distinctly where it lies. A certain proof, that men ever did, and ever will, derive their religion from other sources than from this species of reasoning.

PART

PART X.

IT is my opinion, I own, replied DEMEA, that each man feels, in a manner, the truth of religion within his own breaſt; and from a conſciouſneſs of his imbecillity and miſery, rather than from any reaſoning, is led to ſeek protection from that Being, on whom he and all nature is dependent. So anxious or ſo tedious are even the beſt ſcenes of life, that futurity is ſtill the object of all our hopes and fears. We inceſſantly look forward, and endeavour, by prayers, adoration and ſacrifice, to appeaſe thoſe unknown powers, whom we find, by experience, ſo able to afflict and oppreſs us. Wretched creatures that we are! what reſource for us amidſt the innumerable ills of life, did not religion ſuggeſt ſome methods of atonement, and appeaſe thoſe terrors with which we are inceſſantly agitated and tormented?

I AM indeed perſuaded, ſaid PHILO, that the beſt, and indeed the only, method of bringing every one to a due ſenſe of religion,

is by juſt repreſentations of the miſery and wickedneſs of men. And for that purpoſe a talent of eloquence and ſtrong imagery is more requiſite than that of reaſoning and argument. For is it neceſſary to prove, what every one feels within himſelf? It is only neceſſary to make us feel it, if poſſible, more intimately and ſenſibly.

THE people, indeed, replied DEMEA, are ſufficiently convinced of this great and melancholy truth. The miſeries of life; the unhappineſs of man; the general corruptions of our nature; the unſatisfactory enjoyment of pleaſures, riches, honours; theſe phraſes have become almoſt proverbial in all languages. And who can doubt of what all men declare from their own immediate feeling and experience.

IN this point, ſaid PHILO, the learned are perfectly agreed with the vulgar; and in all letters, *ſacred* and *profane*, the topic of human miſery has been inſiſted on with the moſt pathetic eloquence that ſorrow and melancholy could inſpire. The poets, who ſpeak from ſentiment, without a ſyſtem, and whoſe teſtimony has therefore the more authority, abound in images of this nature. From HOMER down to Dr. YOUNG, the whole inſpired tribe have ever been ſenſible, that no other repreſentation of things would ſuit the feeling and obſervation of each individual.

As

As to authorities, replied DEMEA, you need not ſeek them. Look round this library of CLEANTHES. I ſhall venture to affirm, that, except authors of particular ſciences, ſuch as chymiſtry or botany, who have no occaſion to treat of human life, there is ſcarce one of thoſe innumerable writers, from whom the ſenſe of human miſery has not, in ſome paſſage or other, extorted a complaint and confeſſion of it. At leaſt, the chance is entirely on that ſide; and no one author has ever, ſo far as I can recollect, been ſo extravagant as to deny it.

THERE you muſt excuſe me, ſaid PHILO: LEIBNITZ has denied it; and is perhaps the firſt * who ventured upon ſo bold and paradoxical an opinion; at leaſt, the firſt who made it eſſential to his philoſophical ſyſtem.

AND by being the firſt, replied DEMEA, might he not have been ſenſible of his error? For is this a ſubject in which philoſophers can propoſe to make diſcoveries, eſpecially in ſo late an age? And can any man hope by a ſimple denial (for the ſubject ſcarcely admits of reaſoning) to bear down the united teſtimony of mankind, founded on ſenſe and conſciouſneſs?

* That ſentiment had been maintained by Dr. KING, and ſome few others, before LEIBNITZ; though by none of ſo great fame as that GERMAN philoſopher.

AND why ſhould man, added he, pretend to an exemption from the lot of all other animals? The whole earth, believe me, PHILO, is curſed and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled amongſt all living creatures. Neceſſity, hunger, want, ſtimulate the ſtrong and courageous: fear, anxiety, terror, agitate the weak and infirm. The firſt entrance into life gives anguiſh to the new-born infant and to its wretched parent: weakneſs, impotence, diſtreſs, attend each ſtage of that life: and it is at laſt finiſhed in agony and horror.

OBSERVE too, ſays PHILO, the curious artifices of Nature in order to embitter the life of every living being. The ſtronger prey upon the weaker, and keep them in perpetual terror and anxiety. The weaker too, in their turn, often prey upon the ſtronger, and vex and moleſt them without relaxation. Conſider that innumerable race of inſects, which either are bred on the body of each animal, or flying about infix their ſtings in him. Theſe inſects have others ſtill leſs than themſelves, which torment them. And thus on each hand, before and behind, above and below, every animal is ſurrounded with enemies, which inceſſantly ſeek his miſery and deſtruction.

MAN alone, ſaid DEMEA, ſeems to be, in part, an exception to this rule. For by combination in ſociety, he can eaſily maſter lions, tygers,

tygers, and bears, whoſe greater ſtrength and agility naturally enable them to prey upon him.

ON the contrary, it is here chiefly, cried PHILO, that the uniform and equal maxims of Nature are moſt apparent. Man, it is true, can, by combination, ſurmount all his *real* enemies, and become maſter of the whole animal creation: but does he not immediately raiſe up to himſelf *imaginary* enemies, the dæmons of his fancy, who haunt him with ſuperſtitious terrors, and blaſt every enjoyment of life? His pleaſure, as he imagines, becomes, in their eyes, a crime: his food and repoſe give them umbrage and offence: his very ſleep and dreams furniſh new materials to anxious fear: and even death, his refuge from every other ill, preſents only the dread of endleſs and innumerable woes. Nor does the wolf moleſt more the timid flock, than ſuperſtition does the anxious breaſt of wretched mortals.

BESIDES, conſider, DEMEA: this very ſociety, by which we ſurmount thoſe wild beaſts, our natural enemies; what new enemies does it not raiſe to us? What woe and miſery does it not occaſion? Man is the greateſt enemy of man. Oppreſſion, injuſtice, contempt, contumely, violence, ſedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud; by theſe they mutually torment each other: and they would ſoon diſſolve that ſociety which they had formed, were it not

not for the dread of ſtill greater ills, which muſt attend their ſeparation.

BUT though theſe external inſults, ſaid DEMEA, from animals, from men, from all the elements, which aſſault us, form a frightful catalogue of woes, they are nothing in compariſon of thoſe which ariſe within ourſelves, from the diſtempered condition of our mind and body. How many lie under the lingering torment of diſeaſes? Hear the pathetic enumeration of the great poet,

> Inteſtine ſtone and ulcer, colic-pangs,
> Dæmoniac frenzy, moping melancholy,
> And moon-ſtruck madneſs, pining atrophy,
> Maraſmus, and wide-waſting peſtilence.
> Dire was the toſſing, deep the groans: DESPAIR
> Tended the ſick, buſieſt from couch to couch.
> And over them triumphant DEATH his dart
> Shook; but delay'd to ſtrike, tho' oft invok'd
> With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

THE diſorders of the mind, continued DEMEA, though more ſecret, are not perhaps leſs diſmal and vexatious. Remorſe, ſhame, anguiſh, rage, diſappointment, anxiety, fear, dejection, deſpair; who has ever paſſed through life without cruel inroads from theſe tormentors? How many have ſcarcely ever felt any better ſenſations? Labour and poverty, ſo abhorred by every one, are the certain lot of the far greater number: and thoſe few privileged perſons, who enjoy eaſe and opulence, never

never reach contentment or true felicity. All the goods of life united would not make a very happy man: but all the ills united would make a wretch indeed; and any one of them almoſt (and who can be free from every one?) nay often the abſence of one good (and who can poſſeſs all?) is ſufficient to render life ineligible.

WERE a ſtranger to drop, on a ſudden, into this world, I would ſhow him, as a ſpecimen of its ills, an hoſpital full of diſeaſes, a priſon crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle ſtrowed with carcaſes, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languiſhing under tyranny, famine, or peſtilence. To turn the gay ſide of life to him, and give him a notion of its pleaſures; whither ſhould I conduct him? to a ball, to an opera, to court? He might juſtly think, that I was only ſhowing him a diverſity of diſtreſs and ſorrow.

THERE is no evading ſuch ſtriking inſtances, ſaid PHILO, but by apologies, which ſtill farther aggravate the charge. Why have all men, I aſk, in all ages, complained inceſſantly of the miſeries of life?—They have no juſt reaſon, ſays one: theſe complaints proceed only from their diſcontented, repining, anxious diſpoſition.—And can there poſſibly, I reply, be a more certain foundation of miſery, than ſuch a wretched temper?

BUT

BUT if they were really as unhappy as they pretend, ſays my antagoniſt, why do they remain in life?—

Not ſatisfied with life, afraid of death.

This is the ſecret chain, ſay I, that holds us. We are terrified, not bribed to the continuance of our exiſtence.

IT is only a falſe delicacy, he may inſiſt, which a few refined ſpirits indulge, and which has ſpread theſe complaints among the whole race of mankind.—And what is this delicacy, I aſk, which you blame? Is it any thing but a greater ſenſibility to all the pleaſures and pains of life? and if the man of a delicate, refined temper, by being ſo much more alive than the reſt of the world, is only ſo much more unhappy; what judgment muſt we form in general of human life?

LET men remain at reſt, ſays our adverſary; and they will be eaſy. They are willing artificers of their own miſery.—No! reply I: an anxious languor follows their repoſe; diſappointment, vexation, trouble, their activity and ambition.

I CAN obſerve ſomething like what you mention in ſome others, replied CLEANTHES: but I confeſs, I feel little or nothing of it in myſelf; and hope that it is not ſo common as you repreſent it.

IF

If you feel not human misery yourself, cried Demea, I congratulate you on so happy a singularity. Others, seemingly the most prosperous, have not been ashamed to vent their complaints in the most melancholy strains. Let us attend to the great, the fortunate emperor, Charles V. when, tired with human grandeur, he resigned all his extensive dominions into the hands of his son. In the last harangue, which he made on that memorable occasion, he publicly avowed, *that the greatest prosperities which he had ever enjoyed, had been mixed with so many adversities, that he might truly say he had never enjoyed any satisfaction or contentment.* But did the retired life, in which he sought for shelter, afford him any greater happiness? If we may credit his son's account, his repentance commenced the very day of his resignation.

Cicero's fortune, from small beginnings, rose to the greatest lustre and renown; yet what pathetic complaints of the ills of life do his familiar letters, as well as philosophical discourses, contain? And suitably to his own experience, he introduces Cato, the great, the fortunate Cato, protesting in his old age, that had he a new life in his offer, he would reject the present.

Ask yourself, ask any of your acquaintance, whether they would live over again the last ten

ten or twenty years of their life. No! but the next twenty, they ſay, will be better:

> And from the dregs of life, hope to receive
> What the firſt ſprightly running could not give.

Thus at laſt they find (ſuch is the greatneſs of human miſery, it reconciles even contradictions) that they complain, at once of the ſhortneſs of life, and of its vanity and ſorrow.

And is it poſſible, Cleanthes, ſaid Philo, that after all theſe reflections, and infinitely more, which might be ſuggeſted, you can ſtill perſevere in your Anthropomorphiſm, and aſſert the moral attributes of the Deity, his juſtice, benevolence, mercy, and rectitude, to be of the ſame nature with theſe virtues in human creatures? His power we allow infinite: whatever he wills is executed: but neither man nor any other animal is happy: therefore he does not will their happineſs. His wiſdom is infinite: he is never miſtaken in chooſing the means to any end: but the courſe of Nature tends not to human or animal felicity: therefore it is not eſtabliſhed for that purpoſe. Through the whole compaſs of human knowledge, there are no inferences more certain and infallible than theſe. In what reſpect, then, do his benevolence and mercy reſemble the benevolence and mercy of men?

Epicurus's old queſtions are yet unanſwered.

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Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?

You aſcribe, CLEANTHES, (and I believe juſtly) a purpoſe and intention to Nature. But what, I beſeech you, is the object of that curious artifice and machinery, which ſhe has diſplayed in all animals? The preſervation alone of individuals, and propagation of the ſpecies. It ſeems enough for her purpoſe, if ſuch a rank be barely upheld in the univerſe, without any care or concern for the happineſs of the members that compoſe it. No reſource for this purpoſe: no machinery, in order merely to give pleaſure or eaſe: no fund of pure joy and contentment: no indulgence, without ſome want or neceſſity accompanying it. At leaſt, the few phenomena of this nature are overbalanced by oppoſite phenomena of ſtill greater importance.

OUR ſenſe of muſic, harmony, and indeed beauty of all kinds, gives ſatisfaction, without being abſolutely neceſſary to the preſervation and propagation of the ſpecies. But what racking pains, on the other hand, ariſe from gouts, gravels, megrims, tooth-achs, rheumatiſms; where the injury to the animal-machinery is either ſmall or incurable? Mirth, laughter, play, frolic, ſeem gratuitous ſatisfactions, which have no farther tendency: ſpleen, melancholy, diſ-

diſcontent, ſuperſtition, are pains of the ſame nature. How then does the divine benevolence diſplay itſelf, in the ſenſe of your Anthropomorphites? None but we Myſtics, as you were pleaſed to call us, can account for this ſtrange mixture of phenomena, by deriving it from attributes, infinitely perfect, but incomprehenſible.

AND have you at laſt, ſaid CLEANTHES ſmiling, betrayed your intentions, PHILO? Your long agreement with DEMEA did indeed a little ſurpriſe me; but I find you were all the while erecting a concealed battery againſt me. And I muſt confeſs, that you have now fallen upon a ſubject worthy of your noble ſpirit of oppoſition and controverſy. If you can make out the preſent point, and prove mankind to be unhappy or corrupted, there is an end at once of all religion. For to what purpoſe eſtabliſh the natural attributes of the Deity, while the moral are ſtill doubtful and uncertain?

YOU take umbrage very eaſily, replied DEMEA, at opinions the moſt innocent, and the moſt generally received even amongſt the religious and devout themſelves: and nothing can be more ſurpriſing than to find a topic like this, concerning the wickedneſs and miſery of man, charged with no leſs than Atheiſm and profaneneſs. Have not all pious divines and preachers, who have indulged their rhetoric on ſo fertile a ſubject; have they not eaſily, I ſay, given a

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ſolution of any difficulties which may attend it? This world is but a point in compariſon of the univerſe; this life but a moment in compariſon of eternity. The preſent evil phenomena, therefore, are rectified in other regions, and in ſome future period of exiſtence. And the eyes of men, being then opened to larger views of things, ſee the whole connection of general laws; and trace, with adoration, the benevolence and rectitude of the Deity, through all the mazes and intricacies of his providence.

No! replied CLEANTHES, No! Theſe arbitrary ſuppoſitions can never be admitted, contrary to matter of fact, viſible and uncontroverted. Whence can any cauſe be known but from its known effects? Whence can any hypotheſis be proved but from the apparent phenomena? To eſtabliſh one hypotheſis upon another, is building entirely in the air; and the utmoſt we ever attain, by theſe conjectures and fictions, is to aſcertain the bare poſſibility of our opinion; but never can we, upon ſuch terms, eſtabliſh its reality.

THE only method of ſupporting divine benevolence (and it is what I willingly embrace) is to deny abſolutely the miſery and wickedneſs of man. Your repreſentations are exaggerated; your melancholy views moſtly fictitious; your inferences contrary to fact and experience. Health is more common than ſickneſs; pleaſure than pain; happineſs than miſery. And

for

for one vexation which we meet with, we attain, upon computation, a hundred enjoyments.

ADMITTING your poſition, replied PHILO, which yet is extremely doubtful; you muſt, at the ſame time, allow, that, if pain be leſs frequent than pleaſure, it is infinitely more violent and durable. One hour of it is often able to outweigh a day, a week, a month of our common inſipid enjoyments: and how many days, weeks, and months, are paſſed by ſeveral in the moſt acute torments? Pleaſure, ſcarcely in one inſtance, is ever able to reach ecſtaſy and rapture: and in no one inſtance can it continue for any time at its higheſt pitch and altitude. The ſpirits evaporate; the nerves relax; the fabric is diſordered; and the enjoyment quickly degenerates into fatigue and uneaſineſs. But pain often, good God, how often! riſes to torture and agony; and the longer it continues, it becomes ſtill more genuine agony and torture. Patience is exhauſted; courage languiſhes; melancholy ſeizes us; and nothing terminates our miſery but the removal of its cauſe, or another event, which is the ſole cure of all evil, but which, from our natural folly, we regard with ſtill greater horror and conſternation.

BUT not to inſiſt upon theſe topics, continued PHILO, though moſt obvious, certain, and important; I muſt uſe the freedom to admoniſh you, CLEANTHES, that you have put the

the controverſy upon a moſt dangerous iſſue, and are unawares introducing a total Scepticiſm into the moſt eſſential articles of natural and revealed theology. What! no method of fixing a juſt foundation for religion, unleſs we allow the happineſs of human life, and maintain a continued exiſtence even in this world, with all our preſent pains, infirmities, vexations, and follies, to be eligible and deſirable! But this is contrary to every one's feeling and experience: it is contrary to an authority ſo eſtabliſhed as nothing can ſubvert: no deciſive proofs can ever be produced againſt this authority; nor is it poſſible for you to compute, eſtimate, and compare, all the pains and all the pleaſures in the lives of all men and of all animals: and thus by your reſting the whole ſyſtem of religion on a point, which, from its very nature, muſt for ever be uncertain, you tacitly confeſs, that that ſyſtem is equally uncertain.

But allowing you, what never will be believed; at leaſt, what you never poſſibly can prove; that animal, or at leaſt human happineſs, in this life, exceeds its miſery; you have yet done nothing: for this is not, by any means, what we expect from infinite power, infinite wiſdom, and infinite goodneſs. Why is there any miſery at all in the world? Not by chance ſurely. From ſome cauſe then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent. Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can ſhake the

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ſolidity of this reaſoning, ſo ſhort, ſo clear, ſo deciſive: except we aſſert, that theſe ſubjects exceed all human capacity, and that our common meaſures of truth and falſehood are not applicable to them; a topic, which I have all along inſiſted on, but which you have from the beginning rejected with ſcorn and indignation.

But I will be contented to retire ſtill from this intrenchment, for I deny that you can ever force me in it: I will allow, that pain or miſery in man is *compatible* with infinite power and goodneſs in the Deity, even in your ſenſe of theſe attributes: What are you advanced by all theſe conceſſions? A mere poſſible compatibility is not ſufficient. You muſt *prove* theſe pure, unmixt, and uncontrollable attributes from the preſent mixt and confuſed phenomena, and from theſe alone. A hopeful undertaking! Were the phenomena ever ſo pure and unmixt, yet being finite, they would be inſufficient for that purpoſe. How much more, where they are alſo ſo jarring and diſcordant?

Here, Cleanthes, I find myſelf at eaſe in my argument. Here I triumph. Formerly, when we argued concerning the natural attributes of intelligence and deſign, I needed all my ſceptical and metaphyſical ſubtilty to elude your graſp. In many views of the univerſe, and of its parts, particularly the latter, the beauty

beauty and fitneſs of final cauſes ſtrike us with ſuch irreſiſtible force, that all objections appear (what I believe they really are) mere cavils and ſophiſms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever poſſible for us to repoſe any weight on them. But there is no view of human life, or of the condition of mankind, from which, without the greateſt violence, we can infer the moral attributes, or learn that infinite benevolence, conjoined with infinite power and infinite wiſdom, which we muſt diſcover by the eyes of faith alone. It is your turn now to tug the labouring oar, and to ſupport your philoſophical ſubtilties againſt the dictates of plain reaſon and experience.

PART XI.

I SCRUPLE not to allow, ſaid CLEANTHES, that I have been apt to ſuſpect the frequent repetition of the word *infinite*, which we meet with in all theological writers, to ſavour more of panegyric than of philoſophy; and that any purpoſes of reaſoning, and even of religion, would be better ſerved, were we to reſt contented with more accurate and more moderate expreſſions. The terms, *admirable*, *excellent*, *ſuperlatively great*, *wiſe*, and *holy*; theſe ſufficiently fill the imaginations of men; and any thing beyond, beſides that it leads into abſurdities, has no influence on the affections or ſentiments. Thus, in the preſent ſubject, if we abandon all human analogy, as ſeems your intention, DEMEA, I am afraid we abandon all religion, and retain no conception of the great object of our adoration. If we preſerve human analogy, we muſt for ever find it impoſſible to reconcile any mixture of evil in the univerſe with infinite attributes; much leſs, can we ever prove the latter from the former. But ſuppoſing the Author of Nature

to be finitely perfect, though far exceeding mankind; a ſatisfactory account may then be given of natural and moral evil, and every untoward phenomenon be explained and adjuſted. A leſs evil may then be choſen, in order to avoid a greater: Inconveniencies be ſubmitted to, in order to reach a deſirable end: and in a word, benevolence, regulated by wiſdom, and limited by neceſſity, may produce juſt ſuch a world as the preſent. You, PHILO, who are ſo prompt at ſtarting views, and reflections, and analogies; I would gladly hear, at length, without interruption, your opinion of this new theory; and if it deſerve our attention, we may afterwards, at more leiſure, reduce it into form.

MY ſentiments, replied PHILO, are not worth being made a myſtery of; and therefore, without any ceremony, I ſhall deliver what occurs to me with regard to the preſent ſubject. It muſt, I think, be allowed, that, if a very limited intelligence, whom we ſhall ſuppoſe utterly unacquainted with the univerſe, were aſſured, that it were the production of a very good, wiſe, and powerful Being, however finite, he would, from his conjectures, form *beforehand* a different notion of it from what we find it to be by experience; nor would he ever imagine, merely from theſe attributes of the cauſe, of which he is informed, that the effect could be ſo full of vice and miſery and diſorder, as it apppears in this life. Supposing

poſing now, that this perſon were brought into the world, ſtill aſſured that it was the workmanſhip of ſuch a ſublime and benevolent Being; he might, perhaps, be ſurpriſed at the diſappointment; but would never retract his former belief, if founded on any very ſolid argument; ſince ſuch a limited intelligence muſt be ſenſible of his own blindneſs and ignorance, and muſt allow, that there may be many ſolutions of thoſe phenomena, which will for ever eſcape his comprehenſion. But ſuppoſing, which is the real caſe with regard to man, that this creature is not antecedently convinced of a ſupreme intelligence, benevolent, and powerful, but is left to gather ſuch a belief from the appearances of things; this entirely alters the caſe, nor will he ever find any reaſon for ſuch a concluſion. He may be fully convinced of the narrow limits of his underſtanding; but this will not help him in forming an inference concerning the goodneſs of ſuperior powers, ſince he muſt form that inference from what he knows, not from what he is ignorant of. The more you exaggerate his weakneſs and ignorance, the more diffident you render him, and give him the greater ſuſpicion that ſuch ſubjects are beyond the reach of his faculties. You are obliged, therefore, to reaſon with him merely from the known phenomena, and to drop every arbitrary ſuppoſition or conjecture.

Did I ſhow you a houſe or palace, where there was not one apartment convenient or agree-

agreeable; where the windows, doors, fires, paſſages, ſtairs, and the whole œconomy of the building, were the ſource of noiſe, confuſion, fatigue, darkneſs, and the extremes of heat and cold; you would certainly blame the contrivance, without any farther examination. The architect would in vain diſplay his ſubtilty, and prove to you, that if this door or that window were altered, greater ills would enſue. What he ſays may be ſtrictly true: the alteration of one particular, while the other parts of the building remain, may only augment the inconveniencies. But ſtill you would aſſert in general, that, if the architect had had ſkill and good intentions, he might have formed ſuch a plan of the whole, and might have adjuſted the parts in ſuch a manner, as would have remedied all or moſt of theſe inconveniencies. His ignorance, or even your own ignorance of ſuch a plan, will never convince you of the impoſſibility of it. If you find many inconveniencies and deformities in the building, you will always, without entering into any detail, condemn the architect.

In ſhort, I repeat the queſtion: Is the world, conſidered in general, and as it appears to us in this life, different from what a man, or ſuch a limited being, would, *beforehand*, expect from a very powerful, wiſe, and benevolent Deity? It muſt be ſtrange prejudice to aſſert the contrary. And from thence I conclude, that, however conſiſtent the world may be, allowing cer-

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tain ſuppoſitions and conjectures, with the idea of ſuch a Deity, it can never afford us an inference concerning his exiſtence. The conſiſtence is not abſolutely denied, only the inference. Conjectures, eſpecially where infinity is excluded from the divine attributes, may, perhaps, be ſufficient to prove a conſiſtence; but can never be foundations for any inference.

THERE ſeems to be *four* circumſtances, on which depend all, or the greateſt part of the ills, that moleſt ſenſible creatures; and it is not impoſſible but all theſe circumſtances may be neceſſary and unavoidable. We know ſo little beyond common life, or even of common life, that, with regard to the œconomy of a univerſe, there is no conjecture, however wild, which may not be juſt; nor any one, however plauſible; which may not be erroneous. All that belongs to human underſtanding, in this deep ignorance and obſcurity, is to be ſceptical, or at leaſt cautious; and not to admit of any hypotheſis whatever, much leſs, of any which is ſupported by no appearance of probability. Now this I aſſert to be the caſe with regard to all the cauſes of evil, and the circumſtances on which it depends. None of them appear to human reaſon, in the leaſt degree, neceſſary or unavoidable; nor can we ſuppoſe them ſuch, without the utmoſt licenſe of imagination.

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THE *firſt* circumſtance which introduces evil, is that contrivance or œconomy of the animal creation, by which pains, as well as pleaſures, are employed to excite all creatures to action, and make them vigilant in the great work of ſelf-preſervation. Now pleaſure alone, in its various degrees, ſeems to human underſtanding ſufficient for this purpoſe. All animals might be conſtantly in a ſtate of enjoyment: but when urged by any of the neceſſities of nature, ſuch as thirſt, hunger, wearineſs; inſtead of pain, they might feel a diminution of pleaſure, by which they might be prompted to ſeek that object which is neceſſary to their ſubſiſtence. Men purſue pleaſure as eagerly as they avoid pain; at leaſt, might have been ſo conſtituted. It ſeems, therefore, plainly poſſible to carry on the buſineſs of life without any pain. Why then is any animal ever rendered ſuſceptible of ſuch a ſenſation? If animals can be free from it an hour, they might enjoy a perpetual exemption from it; and it required as particular a contrivance of their organs to produce that feeling, as to endow them with ſight, hearing, or any of the ſenſes. Shall we conjecture, that ſuch a contrivance was neceſſary, without any appearance of reaſon? and ſhall we build on that conjecture, as on the moſt certain truth?

BUT a capacity of pain would not alone produce pain, were it not for the *ſecond* circumſtance, *viz.* the conducting of the world by general

general laws; and this ſeems no wiſe neceſſary to a very perfect Being. It is true; if every thing were conducted by particular volitions, the courſe of nature would be perpetually broken, and no man could employ his reaſon in the conduct of life. But might not other particular volitions remedy this inconvenience? In ſhort, might not the Deity exterminate all ill, wherever it were to be found; and produce all good, without any preparation or long progreſs of cauſes and effects?

Besides, we muſt conſider, that, according to the preſent œconomy of the world, the courſe of Nature, though ſuppoſed exactly regular, yet to us appears not ſo, and many events are uncertain, and many diſappoint our expectations. Health and ſickneſs, calm and tempeſt, with an infinite number of other accidents, whoſe cauſes are unknown and variable, have a great influence both on the fortunes of particular perſons and on the proſperity of public ſocieties: and indeed all human life, in a manner, depends on ſuch accidents. A being, therefore, who knows the ſecret ſprings of the univerſe, might eaſily, by particular volitions, turn all theſe accidents to the good of mankind, and render the whole world happy, without diſcovering himſelf in any operation. A fleet, whoſe purpoſes were ſalutary to ſociety, might always meet with a fair wind: good princes enjoy ſound health and long life: perſons born to power and authority, be framed with

with good tempers and virtuous diſpoſitions. A few ſuch events as theſe, regularly and wiſely conducted, would change the face of the world; and yet would no more ſeem to diſturb the courſe of Nature, or confound human conduct, than the preſent œconomy of things, where the cauſes are ſecret, and variable, and compounded. Some ſmall touches, given to CALIGULA's brain in his infancy, might have converted him into a TRAJAN: one wave, a little higher than the reſt, by burying CÆSAR and his fortune in the bottom of the ocean, might have reſtored liberty to a conſiderable part of mankind. There may, for aught we know, be good reaſons, why Providence interpoſes not in this manner; but they are unknown to us: and though the mere ſuppoſition, that ſuch reaſons exiſt, may be ſufficient to *ſave* the concluſion concerning the divine attributes, yet ſurely it can never be ſufficient to *eſtabliſh* that concluſion.

IF every thing in the univerſe be conducted by general laws, and if animals be rendered ſuſceptible of pain, it ſcarcely ſeems poſſible but ſome ill muſt ariſe in the various ſhocks of matter, and the various concurrence and oppoſition of general laws: but this ill would be very rare, were it not for the *third* circumſtance, which I propoſed to mention, *viz.* the great frugality with which all powers and faculties are diſtributed to every particular being. So well adjuſted are the organs and capacities

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of all animals, and ſo well fitted to their preſervation, that, as far as hiſtory or tradition reaches, there appears not to be any ſingle ſpecies which has yet been extinguiſhed in the univerſe. Every animal has the requiſite endowments; but theſe endowments are beſtowed with ſo ſcrupulous an œconomy, that any conſiderable diminution muſt entirely deſtroy the creature. Wherever one power is increaſed, there is a proportional abatement in the others. Animals, which excel in ſwiftneſs, are commonly defective in force. Thoſe which poſſeſs both, are either imperfect in ſome of their ſenſes, or are oppreſſed with the moſt craving wants. The human ſpecies, whoſe chief excellency is reaſon and ſagacity, is of all others the moſt neceſſitous, and the moſt deficient in bodily advantages; without clothes, without arms, without food, without lodging, without any convenience of life, except what they owe to their own ſkill and induſtry. In ſhort, Nature ſeems to have formed an exact calculation of the neceſſities of her creatures; and, like a *rigid maſter*, has afforded them little more powers or endowments than what are ſtrictly ſufficient to ſupply thoſe neceſſities. An *indulgent parent* would have beſtowed a large ſtock, in order to guard againſt accidents, and ſecure the happineſs and welfare of the creature in the moſt unfortunate concurrence of circumſtance. Every courſe of life would not have been ſo ſurrounded with precipices, that the leaſt departure from the true path, by miſtake

take or neceſſity, muſt involve us in miſery and ruin. Some reſerve, ſome fund, would have been provided to enſure happineſs; nor would the powers and the neceſſities have been adjuſted with ſo rigid an œconomy. The Author of Nature is inconceivably powerful: his force is ſuppoſed great, if not altogether inexhauſtible: nor is there any reaſon, as far as we can judge, to make him obſerve this ſtrict frugality in his dealings with his creatures. It would have been better, were his power extremely limited, to have created fewer animals, and to have endowed theſe with more faculties for their happineſs and preſervation. A builder is never eſteemed prudent, who undertakes a plan beyond what his ſtock will enable him to finiſh.

In order to cure moſt of the ills of human life, I require not that men ſhould have the wings of the eagle, the ſwiftneſs of the ſtag, the force of the ox, the arms of the lion, the ſcales of the crocodile or rhinoceros; much leſs do I demand the ſagacity of an angel or cherubim. I am contented to take an increaſe in one ſingle power or faculty of his ſoul. Let him be endowed with a greater propenſity to induſtry and labour; a more vigorous ſpring and activity of mind; a more conſtant bent to buſineſs and application. Let the whole ſpecies poſſeſs naturally an equal diligence with that which many individuals are able to attain by habit and reflection; and the moſt beneficial

cial conſequences, without any allay of ill, is the immediate and neceſſary reſult of this endowment. Almoſt all the moral, as well as natural evils of human life ariſe from idleneſs; and were our ſpecies, by the original conſtitution of their frame, exempt from this vice or infirmity, the perfect cultivation of land, the improvement of arts and manufactures, the exact execution of every office and duty, immediately follow; and men at once may fully reach that ſtate of ſociety, which is ſo imperfectly attained by the beſt-regulated government. But as induſtry is a power, and the moſt valuable of any, Nature ſeems determined, ſuitably to her uſual maxims, to beſtow it on men with a very ſparing hand; and rather to puniſh him ſeverely for his deficiency in it, than to reward him for his attainments. She has ſo contrived his frame, that nothing but the moſt violent neceſſity can oblige him to labour; and ſhe employs all his other wants to overcome, at leaſt in part, the want of diligence, and to endow him with ſome ſhare of a faculty, of which ſhe has thought fit naturally to bereave him. Here our demands may be allowed very humble, and therefore the more reaſonable. If we required the endowments of ſuperior penetration and judgment, of a more delicate taſte of beauty, of a nicer ſenſibility to benevolence and friendſhip; we might be told, that we impiouſly pretend to break the order of Nature; that we want to exalt ourſelves into a higher rank of being; that the

preſents

preſents which we require, not being ſuitable to our ſtate and condition, would only be pernicious to us. But it is hard; I dare to repeat it, it is hard, that being placed in a world ſo full of wants and neceſſities, where almoſt every being and element is either our foe or refuſes its aſſiſtance—we ſhould alſo have our own temper to ſtruggle with, and ſhould be deprived of that faculty which can alone fence againſt theſe multiplied evils.

THE *fourth* circumſtance, whence ariſes the miſery and ill of the univerſe, is the inaccurate workmanſhip of all the ſprings and principles of the great machine of nature. It muſt be acknowledged, that there are few parts of the univerſe, which ſeem not to ſerve ſome purpoſe, and whoſe removal would not produce a viſible defect and diſorder in the whole. The parts hang all together; nor can one be touched without affecting the reſt, in a greater or leſs degree. But at the ſame time, it muſt be obſerved, that none of theſe parts or principles, however uſeful, are ſo accurately adjuſted, as to keep preciſely within thoſe bounds in which their utility conſiſts; but they are, all of them, apt, on every occaſion, to run into the one extreme or the other. One would imagine, that this grand production had not received the laſt hand of the maker; ſo little finiſhed is every part, and ſo coarſe are the ſtrokes with which it is executed. Thus, the winds are requiſite to convey the vapours along the ſurface

face of the globe, and to assist men in navigation: but how oft, rising up to tempests and hurricanes, do they become pernicious? Rains are necessary to nourish all the plants and animals of the earth: but how often are they defective? how often excessive? Heat is requisite to all life and vegetation; but is not always found in the due proportion. On the mixture and secretion of the humours and juices of the body depend the health and prosperity of the animal: but the parts perform not regularly their proper function. What more useful than all the passions of the mind, ambition, vanity, love, anger? But how oft do they break their bounds, and cause the greatest convulsions in society? There is nothing so advantageous in the universe, but what frequently becomes pernicious, by its excess or defect; nor has Nature guarded, with the requisite accuracy, against all disorder or confusion. The irregularity is never, perhaps, so great as to destroy any species; but is often sufficient to involve the individuals in ruin and misery.

On the concurrence then, of these *four* circumstances, does all or the greatest part of natural evil depend. Were all living creatures incapable of pain, or were the world administered by particular volitions, evil never could have found access into the universe: and were animals endowed with a large stock of powers and faculties, beyond what strict necessity requires; or were the several springs and principles

ples of the univerſe ſo accurately framed as to preſerve always the juſt temperament and medium; there muſt have been very little ill in compariſon of what we feel at preſent. What then ſhall we pronounce on this occaſion? Shall we ſay, that theſe circumſtances are not neceſſary, and that they might eaſily have been altered in the contrivance of the univerſe? This deciſion ſeems too preſumptuous for creatures ſo blind and ignorant. Let us be more modeſt in our concluſions. Let us allow, that, if the goodneſs of the Deity (I mean a goodneſs like the human) could be eſtabliſhed on any tolerable reaſons *a priori*, theſe phenomena, however untoward, would not be ſufficient to ſubvert that principle; but might eaſily, in ſome unknown manner, be reconcilable to it. But let us ſtill aſſert, that as this goodneſs is not antecedently eſtabliſhed, but muſt be inferred from the phenomena, there can be no grounds for ſuch an inference, while there are ſo many ills in the univerſe, and while theſe ills might ſo eaſily have been remedied, as far as human underſtanding can be allowed to judge on ſuch a ſubject. I am Sceptic enough to allow, that the bad appearances, notwithſtanding all my reaſonings, may be compatible with ſuch attributes as you ſuppoſe: but ſurely they can never prove theſe attributes. Such a concluſion cannot reſult from Scepticiſm; but muſt ariſe from the phenomena and from our confidence in the reaſonings which we deduce from theſe phenomena.

Look round this univerſe. What an immenſe profuſion of beings, animated and organized, ſenſible and active! You admire this prodigious variety and fecundity. But inſpect a little more narrowly theſe living exiſtences, the only beings worth regarding. How hoſtile and deſtructive to each other! How inſufficient all of them for their own happineſs! How contemptible or odious to the ſpectator! The whole preſents nothing but the idea of a blind Nature, impregnated by a great vivifying principle, and pouring forth from her lap, without diſcernment or parental care, her maimed and abortive children.

Here the Manichæan ſyſtem occurs as a proper hypotheſis to ſolve the difficulty: and no doubt, in ſome reſpects, it is very ſpecious, and has more probability than the common hypotheſis, by giving a plauſible account of the ſtrange mixture of good and ill which appears in life. But if we conſider, on the other hand, the perfect uniformity and agreement of the parts of the univerſe, we ſhall not diſcover in it any marks of the combat of a malevolent with a benevolent being. There is indeed an oppoſition of pains and pleaſures in the feelings of ſenſible creatures: but are not all the operations of Nature carried on by an oppoſition of principles, of hot and cold, moiſt and dry, light and heavy? The true concluſion is, that the original Source of all things is entirely indifferent to all theſe principles; and has no

more regard to good above ill, than to heat above cold, or to drought above moiſture, or to light above heavy.

THERE may *four* hypotheſes be framed concerning the firſt cauſes of the univerſe: *that* they are endowed with perfect goodneſs; *that* they have perfect malice; *that* they are oppoſite, and have both goodneſs and malice; *that* they have neither goodneſs nor malice. Mixt phenomena can never prove the two former unmixt principles. And the uniformity and ſteadineſs of general laws ſeem to oppoſe the third. The fourth, therefore, ſeems by far the moſt probable.

WHAT I have ſaid concerning natural evil will apply to moral, with little or no variation; and we have no more reaſon to infer, that the rectitude of the Supreme Being reſembles human rectitude than that his benevolence reſembles the human. Nay, it will be thought, that we have ſtill greater cauſe to exclude from him moral ſentiments, ſuch as we feel them; ſince moral evil, in the opinion of many, is much more predominant above moral good than natural evil above natural good.

BUT even though this ſhould not be allowed; and though the virtue, which is in mankind, ſhould be acknowledged much ſuperior to the vice; yet ſo long as there is any vice at all in the

the univerſe, it will very much puzzle your Anthropomorphites, how to account for it. You muſt aſſign a cauſe for it, without having recourſe to the firſt cauſe. But as every effect muſt have a cauſe, and that cauſe another; you muſt either carry on the progreſſion *in infinitum*, or reſt on that original principle, who is the ultimate cauſe of all things . . . . .

HOLD! Hold! cried DEMEA: Whither does your imagination hurry you? I joined in alliance with you, in order to prove the incomprehenſible nature of the Divine Being, and refute the principles of CLEANTHES, who would meaſure every thing by a human rule and ſtandard. But I now find you running into all the topics of the greateſt libertines and infidels; and betraying that holy cauſe, which you ſeemingly eſpouſed. Are you ſecretly, then, a more dangerous enemy than CLEANTHES himſelf?

AND are you ſo late in perceiving it? replied CLEANTHES. Believe me, DEMEA; your friend PHILO, from the beginning, has been amuſing himſelf at both our expence; and it muſt be confeſſed, that the injudicious reaſoning of our vulgar theology has given him but too juſt a handle of ridicule. The total infirmity of human reaſon, the abſolute incomprehenſibility of the Divine Nature, the great and univerſal miſery and ſtill greater wickedneſs of

men; theſe are ſtrange topics, ſurely, to be ſo fondly cheriſhed by orthodox divines and doctors. In ages of ſtupidity and ignorance, indeed, theſe principles may ſafely be eſpouſed; and, perhaps, no views of things are more proper to promote ſuperſtition, than ſuch as encourage the blind amazement, the diffidence, and melancholy of mankind. But at preſent....

BLAME not ſo much, interpoſed PHILO, the ignorance of theſe reverend gentlemen. They know how to change their ſtyle with the times. Formerly it was a moſt popular theological topic to maintain, that human life was vanity and miſery, and to exaggerate all the ills and pains which are incident to men. But of late years, divines, we find, begin to retract this poſition; and maintain, though ſtill with ſome heſitation, that there are more goods than evils, more pleaſures than pains, even in this life. When religion ſtood entirely upon temper and education, it was thought proper to encourage melancholy; as indeed, mankind never have recourſe to ſuperior powers ſo readily as in that diſpoſition. But as men have now learned to form principles, and to draw conſequences, it is neceſſary to change the batteries, and to make uſe of ſuch arguments as will endure at leaſt ſome ſcrutiny and examination. This variation is the ſame (and from the ſame cauſes) with that which I formerly remarked with regard to Scepticiſm.

THUS

THUS PHILO continued to the laſt his ſpirit of oppoſition, and his cenſure of eſtabliſhed opinions. But I could obſerve, that DEMEA did not at all reliſh the latter part of the diſcourſe; and he took occaſion ſoon after, on ſome pretence or other, to leave the company.

PART

PART XII.

AFTER DEMEA's departure, CLEANTHES and PHILO continued the converſation in the following manner. Our friend, I am afraid, ſaid CLEANTHES, will have little inclination to revive this topic of diſcourſe, while you are in company; and to tell truth, PHILO, I ſhould rather wiſh to reaſon with either of you apart on a ſubject ſo ſublime and intereſting. Your ſpirit of controverſy, joined to your abhorrence of vulgar ſuperſtition, carries you ſtrange lengths, when engaged in an argument; and there is nothing ſo ſacred and venerable, even in your own eyes, which you ſpare on that occaſion.

I MUST confeſs, replied PHILO, that I am leſs cautious on the ſubject of Natural Religion than on any other; both becauſe I know that I can never, on that head, corrupt the principles of any man of common ſenſe; and becauſe no one, I am confident, in whoſe eyes I appear

appear a man of ſenſe, will ever miſtake my intentions. You in particular, CLEANTHES, with whom I live in unreſerved intimacy; you are ſenſible, that, notwithſtanding the freedom of my converſation, and my love of ſingular arguments, no one has a deeper ſenſe of religion impreſſed on his mind, or pays more profound adoration to the Divine Being, as he diſcovers himſelf to reaſon, in the inexplicable contrivance and artifice of Nature. A purpoſe, an intention, a deſign, ſtrikes every where the moſt careleſs, the moſt ſtupid thinker; and no man can be ſo hardened in abſurd ſyſtems, as at all times to reject it. *That Nature does nothing in vain*, is a maxim eſtabliſhed in all the ſchools, merely from the contemplation of the works of Nature, without any religious purpoſe; and, from a firm conviction of its truth, an anatomiſt, who had obſerved a new organ or canal, would never be ſatisfied till he had alſo diſcovered its uſe and intention. One great foundation of the COPERNICAN ſyſtem is the maxim, *That Nature acts by the ſimpleſt methods, and chooſes the moſt proper means to any end*; and aſtronomers often, without thinking of it lay this ſtrong foundation of piety and religion. The ſame thing is obſervable in other parts of philoſophy: And thus all the ſciences almoſt lead us inſenſibly to acknowledge a firſt intelligent Author; and their authority is often ſo much the greater, as they do not directly profeſs that intention.

It is with pleaſure I hear Galen reaſon concerning the ſtructure of the human body. The anatomy of a man, ſays he *, diſcovers above 600 different muſcles; and whoever duly conſiders theſe, will find, that in each of them Nature muſt have adjuſted at leaſt ten different circumſtances, in order to attain the end which ſhe propoſed; proper figure, juſt magnitude, right diſpoſition of the ſeveral ends, upper and lower poſition of the whole, the due inſertion of the ſeveral nerves, veins, and arteries: ſo that, in the muſcles alone, above 6000 ſeveral views and intentions muſt have been formed and executed. The bones he calculates to be 284: the diſtinct purpoſes, aimed at in the ſtructure of each, above forty. What a prodigious diſplay of artifice, even in theſe ſimple and homogeneous parts? But if we conſider the ſkin, ligaments, veſſels, glandules, humours, the ſeveral limbs and members of the body; how muſt our aſtoniſhment riſe upon us, in proportion to the number and intricacy of the parts ſo artificially adjuſted? The farther we advance in theſe reſearches, we diſcover new ſcenes of art and wiſdom: But deſcry ſtill, at a diſtance, farther ſcenes beyond our reach; in the fine internal ſtructure of the parts, in the œconomy of the brain, in the fabric of the ſeminal veſſels. All theſe artifices are repeated in every different ſpecies of animal, with wonderful variety, and with exact propriety, ſuited to the different intentions

* De formatione fœtûs.

tions of Nature in framing each ſpecies. And if the infidelity of GALEN, even when theſe natural ſciences were ſtill imperfect, could not withſtand ſuch ſtriking appearances; to what pitch of pertinacious obſtinacy muſt a philoſopher of this age have attained, who can now doubt of a Supreme Intelligence?

COULD I meet with one of this ſpecies (who, I thank God, are very rare) I would aſk him: ſuppoſing there were a God, who did not diſcover himſelf immediately to our ſenſes; were it poſſible for him to give ſtronger proofs of his exiſtence, than what appear on the whole face of Nature? What indeed could ſuch a Divine Being do, but copy the preſent œconomy of things; render many of his artifices ſo plain, that no ſtupidity could miſtake them; afford glimpſes of ſtill greater artifices, which demonſtrate his prodigious ſuperiority above our narrow apprehenſions; and conceal altogether a great many from ſuch imperfect creatures? Now, according to all rules of juſt reaſoning, every fact muſt paſs for undiſputed, when it is ſupported by all the arguments which its nature admits of; even though theſe arguments be not, in themſelves, very numerous or forcible: how much more, in the preſent caſe, where no human imagination can compute their number, and no underſtanding eſtimate their cogency?

I SHALL

I SHALL farther add, ſaid CLEANTHES, to what you have ſo well urged, that one great advantage of the principle of Theiſm, is, that it is the only ſyſtem of coſmogony which can be rendered intelligible and complete, and yet can throughout preſerve a ſtrong analogy to what we every day ſee and experience in the world. The compariſon of the univerſe to a machine of human contrivance is ſo obvious and natural, and is juſtified by ſo many inſtances of order and deſign in Nature, that it muſt immediately ſtrike all unprejudiced apprehenſions, and procure univerſal approbation. Whoever attempts to weaken this theory, cannot pretend to ſucceed by eſtabliſhing in its place any other that is preciſe and determinate: it is ſufficient for him, if he ſtart doubts and difficulties; and by remote and abſtract views of things, reach that ſuſpenſe of judgment, which is here the utmoſt boundary of his wiſhes. But beſides that this ſtate of mind is in itſelf unſatisfactory, it can never be ſteadily maintained againſt ſuch ſtriking appearances as continually engage us into the religious hypotheſis. A falſe, abſurd ſyſtem, human nature, from the force of prejudice, is capable of adhering to with obſtinacy and perſeverance: but no ſyſtem at all, in oppoſition to a theory ſupported by ſtrong and obvious reaſon, by natural propenſity, and by early education, I think it abſolutely impoſſible to maintain or defend.

So

So little, replied PHILO, do I eſteem this ſuſpenſe of judgment in the preſent caſe to be poſſible, that I am apt to ſuſpect there enters ſomewhat of a diſpute of words into this controverſy, more than is uſually imagined. That the works of Nature bear a great analogy to the productions of art, is evident; and according to all the rules of good reaſoning, we ought to infer, if we argue at all concerning them, that their cauſes have a proportional analogy. But as there are alſo conſiderable differences, we have reaſon to ſuppoſe a proportional difference in the cauſes; and in particular ought to attribute a much higher degree of power and energy to the ſupreme cauſe than any we have ever obſerved in mankind. Here then the exiſtence of a DEITY is plainly aſcertained by reaſon: and if we make it a queſtion, whether, on account of theſe analogies, we can properly call him a *mind* or *intelligence*, notwithſtanding the vaſt difference which may reaſonably be ſuppoſed between him and human minds; what is this but a mere verbal controverſy? No man can deny the analogies between the effects: to reſtrain ourſelves from inquiring concerning the cauſes, is ſcarcely poſſible: from this inquiry, the legitimate concluſion is, that the cauſes have alſo an analogy: and if we are not contented with calling the firſt and ſupreme cauſe a GOD or DEITY, but deſire to vary the expreſſion; what can we call him but MIND or THOUGHT,

THOUGHT, to which he is juſtly ſuppoſed to bear a conſiderable reſemblance?

ALL men of ſound reaſon are diſguſted with verbal diſputes, which abound ſo much in philoſophical and theological inquiries; and it is found, that the only remedy for this abuſe muſt ariſe from clear definitions, from the preciſion of thoſe ideas which enter into any argument, and from the ſtrict and uniform uſe of thoſe terms which are employed. But there is a ſpecies of controverſy, which, from the very nature of language and of human ideas, is involved in perpetual ambiguity, and can never, by any precaution or any definitions, be able to reach a reaſonable certainty or preciſion. Theſe are the controverſies concerning the degrees of any quality or circumſtance. Men may argue to all eternity, whether HANNIBAL be a great, or a very great, or a ſuperlatively great man, what degree of beauty CLEOPATRA poſſeſſed, what epithet of praiſe LIVY or THUCIDYDES is intitled to, without bringing the controverſy to any determination. The diſputants may here agree in their ſenſe, and differ in the terms, or *vice verſa*; yet never be able to define their terms, ſo as to enter into each others meaning: becauſe the degrees of theſe qualities are not, like quantity or number, ſuſceptible of any exact menſuration, which may be the ſtandard in the controverſy. That the diſpute concerning Theiſm is of this nature, and conſequently is merely verbal, or perhaps,

perhaps, if poſſible, ſtill more incurably ambiguous, will appear upon the ſlighteſt inquiry. I aſk the Theiſt, if he does not allow, that there is a great and immeaſurable, becauſe incomprehenſible, difference between the *human* and the *divine* mind: the more pious he is, the more readily will he aſſent to the affirmative, and the more will he be diſpoſed to magnify the difference: he will even aſſert, that the difference is of a nature which cannot be too much magnified. I next turn to the Atheiſt, who, I aſſert, is only nominally ſo, and can never poſſibly be in earneſt; and I aſk him, whether, from the coherence and apparent ſympathy in all the parts of this world, there be not a certain degree of analogy among all the operations of Nature, in every ſituation and in every age; whether the rotting of a turnip, the generation of an animal, and the ſtructure of human thought, be not energies that probably bear ſome remote analogy to each other: it is impoſſible he can deny it: he will readily acknowledge it. Having obtained this conceſſion, I puſh him ſtill farther in his retreat; and I aſk him, if it be not probable, that the principle which firſt arranged, and ſtill maintains order in this univerſe, bears not alſo ſome remote inconceivable analogy to the other operations of Nature, and among the reſt to the œconomy of human mind and thought. However reluctant, he muſt give his aſſent. Where then, cry I to both theſe antagoniſts, is the ſubject of your diſpute?

The

The Theiſt allows, that the original intelligence is very different from human reaſon: the Atheiſt allows, that the original principle of order bears ſome remote analogy to it. Will you quarrel, Gentlemen, about the degrees; and enter into a controverſy, which admits not of any preciſe meaning, nor conſequently of any determination? If you ſhould be ſo obſtinate, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed to find you inſenſibly change ſides; while the Theiſt, on the one hand, exaggerates the diſſimilarity between the Supreme Being, and frail, imperfect, variable, fleeting, and mortal creatures: and the Atheiſt, on the other, magnifies the analogy among all the operations of Nature, in every period, every ſituation, and every poſition. Conſider then, where the real point of controverſy lies; and if you cannot lay aſide your diſputes, endeavour, at leaſt, to cure yourſelves of your animoſity.

AND here I muſt alſo acknowledge, CLEANTHES, that, as the works of Nature have a much greater analogy to the effects of *our* art and contrivance, than to thoſe of *our* benevolence and juſtice; we have reaſon to infer, that the natural attributes of the Deity have a greater reſemblance to thoſe of men, than his moral have to human virtues. But what is the conſequence? Nothing but this, that the moral qualities of man are more defective in their kind than his natural abilities. For as the Supreme Being is allowed to be abſo-

abſolutely and entirely perfect; whatever differs moſt from him, departs the fartheſt from the ſupreme ſtandard of rectitude and perfection *.

THESE, CLEANTHES, are my unfeigned ſentiments on this ſubject; and theſe ſentiments, you know, I have ever cheriſhed and maintained. But in proportion to my veneration for true religion, is my abhorrence of vulgar ſuperſtitions; and I indulge a peculiar pleaſure, I confeſs, in puſhing ſuch principles, ſometimes into abſurdity, ſometimes into impiety. And you are ſenſible, that all bigots, notwithſtanding their great averſion to the latter above the former, are commonly equally guilty of both.

My

* It ſeems evident, that the diſpute between the Sceptics and Dogmatiſts is entirely verbal; or at leaſt regards only the degrees of doubt and aſſurance, which we ought to indulge with regard to all reaſoning: and ſuch diſputes are commonly, at the bottom, verbal, and admit not of any preciſe determination. No philoſophical Dogmatiſt denies, that there are difficulties both with regard to the ſenſes and to all ſcience; and that theſe difficulties are in a regular, logical method, abſolutely inſolvable. No Sceptic denies, that we lie under an abſolute neceſſity, notwithſtanding theſe difficulties, of thinking, and believing, and reaſoning, with regard to all kinds of ſubjects, and even of frequently aſſenting with confidence and ſecurity. The only difference, then, between theſe ſects, if they merit that name, is, that the Sceptic, from habit, caprice, or inclination, inſiſts moſt on the difficulties; the Dogmatiſt, for like reaſons, on the neceſſity.

My inclination, replied CLEANTHES, lies, I own, a contrary way. Religion, however corrupted, is ſtill better than no religion at all. The doctrine of a future ſtate is ſo ſtrong and neceſſary a ſecurity to morals, that we never ought to abandon or neglect it. For if finite and temporary rewards and puniſhments have ſo great an effect, as we daily find; how much greater muſt be expected from ſuch as are infinite and eternal?

How happens it then, ſaid PHILO, if vulgar ſuperſtition be ſo ſalutary to ſociety, that all hiſtory abounds ſo much with accounts of its pernicious conſequences on public affairs? Factions, civil wars, perſecutions, ſubverſions of government, oppreſſion, ſlavery; theſe are the diſmal conſequences which always attend its prevalency over the minds of men. If the religious ſpirit be ever mentioned in any hiſtorical narration, we are ſure to meet afterwards with a detail of the miſeries which attend it. And no period of time can be happier or more proſperous, than thoſe in which it is never regarded or heard of.

THE reaſon of this obſervation, replied CLEANTHES, is obvious. The proper office of religion is to regulate the heart of men, humanize their conduct, infuſe the ſpirit of temperance, order, and obedience; and as its operation is ſilent, and only enforces the motives

of morality and juſtice, it is in danger of being overlooked, and confounded with theſe other motives. When it diſtinguiſhes itſelf, and acts as a ſeparate principle over men, it has departed from its proper ſphere, and has become only a cover to faction and ambition.

AND ſo will all religion, ſaid PHILO, except the philoſophical and rational kind. Your reaſonings are more eaſily eluded than my facts. The inference is not juſt, becauſe finite and temporary rewards and puniſhments have ſo great influence, that therefore ſuch as are infinite and eternal muſt have ſo much greater. Conſider, I beſeech you, the attachment which we have to preſent things, and the little concern which we diſcover for objects ſo remote and uncertain. When divines are declaiming againſt the common behaviour and conduct of the world, they always repreſent this principle as the ſtrongeſt imaginable (which indeed it is); and deſcribe almoſt all human kind as lying under the influence of it, and ſunk into the deepeſt lethargy and unconcern about their religious intereſts. Yet theſe ſame divines, when they refute their ſpeculative antagoniſts, ſuppoſe the motives of religion to be ſo powerful, that, without them, it were impoſſible for civil ſociety to ſubſiſt; nor are they aſhamed of ſo palpable a contradiction. It is certain, from experience, that the ſmalleſt grain of natural honeſty and benevolence has more effect on

mens

mens conduct, than the moſt pompous views ſuggeſted by theological theories and ſyſtems. A man's natural inclination works inceſſantly upon him; it is for ever preſent to the mind; and mingles itſelf with every view and conſideration: whereas religious motives, where they act at all, operate only by ſtarts and bounds; and it is ſcarcely poſſible for them to become altogether habitual to the mind. The force of the greateſt gravity, ſay the philoſophers, is infinitely ſmall, in compariſon of that of the leaſt impulſe: yet it is certain, that the ſmalleſt gravity will, in the end, prevail above a great impulſe; becauſe no ſtrokes or blows can be repeated with ſuch conſtancy as attraction and gravitation.

Another advantage of inclination: it engages on its ſide all the wit and ingenuity of the mind; and when ſet in oppoſition to religious principles, ſeeks every method and art of eluding them: in which it is almoſt always ſucceſsful. Who can explain the heart of man, or account for thoſe ſtrange ſalvos and excuſes, with which people ſatisfy themſelves, when they follow their inclinations in oppoſition to their religious duty? This is well underſtood in the world; and none but fools ever repoſe leſs truſt in a man, becauſe they hear, that, from ſtudy and philoſophy, he has entertained ſome ſpeculative doubts with regard to theological ſubjects. And when we have to do with

a man, who makes a great profeſſion of religion and devotion; has this any other effect upon ſeveral, who paſs for prudent, than to put them on their guard, leſt they be cheated and deceived by him?

We muſt farther conſider, that philoſophers, who cultivate reaſon and reflection, ſtand leſs in need of ſuch motives to keep them under the reſtraint of morals: and that the vulgar, who alone may need them, are utterly incapable of ſo pure a religion as repreſents the Deity to be pleaſed with nothing but virtue in human behaviour. The recommendations to the Divinity are generally ſuppoſed to be either frivolous obſervances, or rapturous ecſtaſies, or a bigotted credulity. We need not run back into antiquity, or wander into remote regions, to find inſtances of this degeneracy. Amongſt ourſelves, ſome have been guilty of that atrociouſneſs, unknown to the Egyptian and Grecian ſuperſtitions, of declaiming, in expreſs terms, againſt morality; and repreſenting it as a ſure forfeiture of the divine favour, if the leaſt truſt or reliance be laid upon it.

But even though ſuperſtition or enthuſiaſm ſhould not put itſelf in direct oppoſition to morality; the very diverting of the attention, the raiſing up a new and frivolous ſpecies of merit, the prepoſterous diſtribution which it makes of praiſe and blame, muſt have the moſt pernicious

nicious conſequences, and weaken extremely mens attachment to the natural motives of juſtice and humanity.

Such a principle of action likewiſe, not being any of the familiar motives of human conduct, acts only by intervals on the temper; and muſt be rouzed by continual efforts, in order to render the pious zealot ſatisfied with his own conduct, and make him fulfil his devotional taſk. Many religious exerciſes are entered into with ſeeming fervour, where the heart, at the time, feels cold and languid: a habit of diſſimulation is by degrees contracted: and fraud and falſehood become the predominant principle. Hence the reaſon of that vulgar obſervation, that the higheſt zeal in religion and the deepeſt hypocriſy, ſo far from being inconſiſtent, are often or commonly united in the ſame individual character.

The bad effects of ſuch habits, even in common life, are eaſily imagined: but where the intereſts of religion are concerned, no morality can be forcible enough to bind the enthuſiaſtic zealot. The ſacredneſs of the cauſe ſanctifies every meaſure which can be made uſe of to promote it.

The ſteady attention alone to ſo important an intereſt as that of eternal ſalvation, is apt to extinguiſh the benevolent affections, and beget

get a narrow, contracted ſelfiſhneſs. And when ſuch a temper is encouraged, it eaſily eludes all the general precepts of charity and benevolence.

THUS the motives of vulgar ſuperſtition have no great influence on general conduct; nor is their operation very favourable to morality, in the inſtances where they predominate.

Is there any maxim in politics more certain and infallible, than that both the number and authority of prieſts ſhould be confined within very narrow limits; and that the civil magiſtrate ought, for ever, to keep his *faſces* and *axes* from ſuch dangerous hands? But if the ſpirit of popular religion were ſo ſalutary to ſociety, a contrary maxim ought to prevail. The greater number of prieſts, and their greater authority and riches, will always augment the religious ſpirit. And though the prieſts have the guidance of this ſpirit, why may we not expect a ſuperior ſanctity of life, and greater benevolence and moderation, from perſons who are ſet apart for religion, who are continually inculcating it upon others, and who muſt themſelves imbibe a greater ſhare of it? Whence comes it then, that, in fact, the utmoſt a wiſe magiſtrate can propoſe with regard to popular religions, is, as far as poſſible, to make a ſaving game of it, and to prevent their perni-

pernicious conſequences with regard to ſociety? Every expedient which he tries for ſo humble a purpoſe is ſurrounded with inconveniencies. If he admits only one religion among his ſubjects, he muſt ſacrifice, to an uncertain proſpect of tranquillity, every conſideration of public liberty, ſcience, reaſon, induſtry, and even his own independency. If he gives indulgence to ſeveral ſects, which is the wiſer maxim, he muſt preſerve a very philoſophical indifference to all of them, and carefully reſtrain the pretenſions of the prevailing ſect; otherwiſe he can expect nothing but endleſs diſputes, quarrels, factions, perſecutions, and civil commotions.

TRUE religion, I allow, has no ſuch pernicious conſequences: but we muſt treat of religion, as it has commonly been found in the world; nor have I any thing to do with that ſpeculative tenet of Theiſm, which, as it is a ſpecies of philoſophy, muſt partake of the beneficial influence of that principle, and at the ſame time muſt lie under a like inconvenience, of being always confined to very few perſons.

OATHS are requiſite in all courts of judicature; but it is a queſtion whether their authority ariſes from any popular religion. It is the ſolemnity and importance of the occaſion, the regard to reputation, and the reflecting on the

the general intereſts of ſociety, which are the chief reſtraints upon mankind. Cuſtom-houſe oaths and political oaths are but little regarded even by ſome who pretend to principles of honeſty and religion; and a Quaker's aſſeveration is with us juſtly put upon the ſame footing with the oath of any other perſon. I know, that POLYBIUS * aſcribes the infamy of GREEK faith to the prevalency of the EPICUREAN philoſophy: but I know alſo, that PUNIC faith had as bad a reputation in ancient times, as IRISH evidence has in modern; though we cannot account for theſe vulgar obſervations by the ſame reaſon. Not to mention, that GREEK faith was infamous before the riſe of the EPICUREAN philoſophy; and EURIPIDES †, in a paſſage which I ſhall point out to you, has glanced a remarkable ſtroke of ſatire againſt his nation, with regard to this circumſtance.

TAKE care, PHILO, replied CLEANTHES, take care: puſh not matters too far: allow not your zeal againſt falſe religion to undermine your veneration for the true. Forfeit not this principle, the chief, the only great comfort in life; and our principal ſupport amidſt all the attacks of adverſe fortune. The moſt agreeable reflection, which it is poſſible for human imagination to ſuggeſt, is that of genuine

* Lib. vi. cap. 54. † Iphigenia in Tauride.

genuine Theism, which represents us as the workmanship of a Being perfectly good, wise, and powerful; who created us for happiness; and who, having implanted in us immeasurable desires of good, will prolong our existence to all eternity, and will transfer us into an infinite variety of scenes, in order to satisfy those desires, and render our felicity complete and durable. Next to such a Being himself (if the comparison be allowed), the happiest lot which we can imagine, is that of being under his guardianship and protection.

THESE appearances, said PHILO, are most engaging and alluring; and with regard to the true philosopher, they are more than appearances. But it happens here, as in the former case, that, with regard to the greater part of mankind, the appearances are deceitful, and that the terrors of religion commonly prevail above its comforts.

IT is allowed, that men never have recourse to devotion so readily as when dejected with grief or depressed with sickness. Is not this a proof, that the religious spirit is not so nearly allied to joy as to sorrow?

BUT men, when afflicted, find consolation in religion, replied CLEANTHES. Sometimes, said PHILO: but it is natural to imagine, that they will form a notion of those unknown beings,

ings, ſuitably to the preſent gloom and melancholy of their temper, when they betake themſelves to the contemplation of them. Accordingly, we find the tremendous images to predominate in all religions; and we ourſelves, after having employed the moſt exalted expreſſion in our deſcriptions of the Deity, fall into the flatteſt contradiction, in affirming, that the damned are infinitely ſuperior in number to the elect.

I SHALL venture to affirm, that there never was a popular religion, which repreſented the ſtate of departed ſouls in ſuch a light, as would render it eligible for human kind, that there ſhould be ſuch a ſtate. Theſe fine models of religion are the mere product of philoſophy. For as death lies between the eye and the proſpect of futurity, that event is ſo ſhocking to Nature, that it muſt throw a gloom on all the regions which lie beyond it; and ſuggeſt to the generality of mankind the idea of CERBERUS and Furies; devils, and torrents of fire and brimſtone.

IT is true, both fear and hope enter into religion; becauſe both theſe paſſions, at different times, agitate the human mind, and each of them forms a ſpecies of divinity ſuitable to itſelf. But when a man is in a cheerful diſpoſition, he is fit for buſineſs, or company, or entertainment of any kind; and he naturally

naturally applies himſelf to theſe, and thinks not of religion. When melancholy and dejected he has nothing to do but brood upon the terrors of the inviſible world, and to plunge himſelf ſtill deeper in affliction. It may, indeed, happen, that after he has, in this manner, engraved the religious opinions deep into his thought and imagination, there may arrive a change of health or circumſtances, which may reſtore his good-humour, and raiſing cheerful proſpects of futurity, make him run into the other extreme of joy and triumph. But ſtill it muſt be acknowledged, that, as terror is the primary principle of religion, it is the paſſion which always predominates in it, and admits but of ſhort intervals of pleaſure.

Not to mention, that theſe fits of exceſſive, enthuſiaſtic joy, by exhauſting the ſpirits, always prepare the way for equal fits of ſuperſtitious terror and dejection; nor is there any ſtate of mind ſo happy as the calm and equable. But this ſtate it is impoſſible to ſupport, where a man thinks, that he lies, in ſuch profound darkneſs and uncertainty, between an eternity of happineſs and an eternity of miſery. No wonder, that ſuch an opinion disjoints the ordinary frame of the mind, and throws it into the utmoſt confuſion. And though that opinion is ſeldom ſo ſteady in its operation as to influence all the actions; yet is it apt to make a

conſi-

conſiderable breach in the temper, and to produce that gloom and melancholy ſo remarkable in all devout people.

It is contrary to common ſenſe to entertain apprehenſions or terrors upon account of any opinion whatſoever, or to imagine that we run any riſk hereafter, by the freeſt uſe of our reaſon. Such a ſentiment implies both an *abſurdity* and an *inconſiſtency*. It is an abſurdity to believe that the Deity has human paſſions, and one of the loweſt of human paſſions, a reſtleſs appetite for applauſe. It is an inconſiſtency to believe, that, ſince the Deity has this human paſſion, he has not others alſo; and in particular, a diſregard to the opinions of creatures ſo much inferior.

To know God, ſays SENECA, *is to worſhip him*. All other worſhip is indeed abſurd, ſuperſtitious, and even impious. It degrades him to the low condition of mankind, who are delighted with intreaty, ſolicitation, preſents, and flattery. Yet is this impiety the ſmalleſt of which ſuperſtition is guilty. Commonly, it depreſſes the Deity far below the condition of mankind; and repreſents him as a capricious dæmon, who exerciſes his power without reaſon and without humanity! And were that Divine Being diſpoſed to be offended at the vices and follies of ſilly mortals, who are his own workmanſhip; ill would it ſurely fare with the votaries

taries of moſt popular ſuperſtitions. Nor would any of human race merit his *favour*, but a very few, the philoſophical Theiſts, who entertain, or rather indeed endeavour to entertain, ſuitable notions of his divine perfections: as the only perſons, intitled to his *compaſſion* and *indulgence*, would be the philoſophical Sceptics, a ſect almoſt equally rare, who, from a natural diffidence of their own capacity, ſuſpend, or endeavour to ſuſpend, all judgment with regard to ſuch ſublime and ſuch extraordinary ſubjects.

If the whole of Natural Theology, as ſome people ſeem to maintain, reſolves itſelf into one ſimple, though ſomewhat ambiguous, at leaſt undefined propoſition, *That the cauſe or cauſes of order in the univerſe probably bear ſome remote analogy to human intelligence:* If this propoſition be not capable of extenſion, variation, or more particular explication: if it affords no inference that affects human life, or can be the ſource of any action or forbearance: and if the analogy, imperfect as it is, can be carried no farther than to the human intelligence; and cannot be transferred, with any appearance of probability, to the other qualities of the mind: if this really be the caſe, what can the moſt inquiſitive, contemplative, and religious man do more than give a plain, philoſophical aſſent to the propoſition, as often as it occurs; and believe that the arguments

guments on which it is eſtabliſhed, exceed the objections which lie againſt it? Some aſtoniſhment indeed will naturally ariſe from the greatneſs of the object; ſome melancholy from its obſcurity; ſome contempt of human reaſon, that it can give no ſolution more ſatisfactory with regard to ſo extraordinary and magnificent a queſtion. But believe me, CLEANTHES, the moſt natural ſentiment, which a well-diſpoſed mind will feel on this occaſion, is a longing deſire and expectation, that heaven would be pleaſed to diſſipate, at leaſt alleviate, this profound ignorance, by affording ſome more particular revelation to mankind, and making diſcoveries of the nature, attributes, and operations, of the divine object of our faith. A perſon, ſeaſoned with a juſt ſenſe of the imperfections of natural reaſon, will fly to revealed truth with the greateſt avidity: while the haughty Dogmatiſt, perſuaded that he can erect a complete ſyſtem of Theology by the mere help of philoſophy, diſdains any farther aid, and rejects this adventitious inſtructor. To be a philoſophical Sceptic is, in a man of letters, the firſt and moſt eſſential ſtep towards being a ſound, believing Chriſtian; a propoſition, which I would wilingly recommend to the attention of PAMPHILUS: and I hope CLEANTHES will forgive me for interpoſing ſo far in the education and inſtruction of his pupil.

CLEAN-

CLEANTHES and PHILO purſued not this converſation much farther: and as nothing ever made greater impreſſion on me, than all the reaſonings of that day; ſo, I confeſs, that, upon a ſerious review of the whole, I cannot but think, that PHILO's principles are more probable than DEMEA's; but that thoſe of CLEANTHES approach ſtill nearer to the truth.

THE END.

DIVINE BENEVOLENCE

ASSERTED;

AND VINDICATED FROM

THE OBJECTIONS

OF

ANCIENT AND MODERN SCEPTICS.

By THOMAS BALGUY, D. D.

ARCHDEACON OF WINCHESTER.

Faciam rem non difficilem, cauſam Deorum agam.
SEN. de Prov.

Πάντων μὲν ἡγεμὼν ἀγαθῶν, πάντων δὲ πατὴρ καλῶν, ἐκεῖνός ἐστι, κὴ φᾶυλον ἐδὲν ποιεῖν ἀυτῶ δίμις, ὥσπερ ἐδὲ πάσχειν, ΑΓΑΘΟΣ γάρ ἐστι.

Plut. Non poſſe ſuav. vivi ſec. Epicurum.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Treatiſe is a ſpecimen of a larger work on the ſubject of natural religion: why publiſhed at this time, will be too eaſily conjectured.

THIS ſubject is reducible to three general heads: God's being, his perfection, his moral government.

I. To prove the *being* of God, is to prove the exiſtence of a wiſe and benevolent Author of Nature. The name of GOD would be improperly applied, either to an *unconcerned* ſpectator of natural events, or an *undiſcerning* cauſe, or a *malevolent* author, and contriver, of them. The idea therefore ſignified by this name, includes the three attributes of *power*, *wiſdom*, and *goodneſs*.

POWER and wiſdom will appear in a moſt amazing degree, if *each* part of the univerſe

proceed from an *intelligent* cauſe, and *all* its parts from *one* and the *ſame* cauſe.—Goodneſs is the ſubject of the following papers.

II. To prove the *perfection* of God, is to prove that he unites in himſelf every *kind* and *degree* of theſe attributes, which really *exiſts* in the univerſe; and this, without any limitation of *time* or *place*.

I SAY not, that he poſſeſſes all *conceivable* power, &c. for we are very apt to *miſconceive*. I *need* not ſay, that he poſſeſſes *infinite* power, &c. for this expreſſion has no other meaning than what has already been pointed out.

III. ON the ſubject of God's *moral government*, it ought to be ſhewn,

1. That men are *actually* under divine government.

2. That the laws of this government are *moral*.

3. That the laws are *imperfectly* executed.

4. That the ſeeming defects and errors of God's *preſent* government will be ſupplied and corrected in a *future ſtate*.

ON the *laſt* of theſe heads God has not ſeen fit to give us that full and deciſive evidence, which our fond imaginations might lead us to expect. *Nature* indeed ſuggeſts the *hopes* of future happineſs. But it was reſerved for the

Chriſ-

Chriſtian revelation to bring *life and immortality to light.*

THE beſt *foundation* for ſuch hopes, as may be derived from *natural* appearances, would be laid in the following propoſitions:

1ſt. That men will continue to *exiſt* after death, and will continue *ſubject* to God's *moral government.*

2dly. That their preſent and future exiſtence are parts of *one ſcheme.*

3dly. That this ſcheme will either continually *approach* to perfection, or become, in time, *abſolutely perfect.*

FROM this ſketch the reader will underſtand, that the reflections laid before him, however imperfect, are no haſty production; but the reſult of care and thought. Poſſibly the outlines here drawn will, at ſome time or other, be filled up.

DIVINE

DIVINE BENEVOLENCE

ASSERTED, &c.

THE divine goodneſs is conſidered by ſome writers as conſiſting wholly in *benevolence:* by others, as comprehending ſome other moral perfections, not perhaps reducible to this head. But the idea of benevolence is by all writers *included* under that of goodneſs; and is at leaſt a very affecting and intereſting part of it: and this only is the ſubject of the following diſquiſition.

THAT the Author of Nature has been influenced by a benevolent principle, both in framing and preſerving the univerſe, is uſually proved from the degree of happineſs *actually* produced in this ſyſtem; or at leaſt from the *prepollency* of good. But this argument alone may not perhaps give intire ſatisfaction to a ſcrupulous inquirer. If we conſider the good *only*, excluſively of the evil, our premiſes will be too narrow to ſupport our concluſion.

If

If we conſider *both*, we may more eaſily ſatisfy ourſelves, than prove to the conviction of others, that the good exceeds the evil.

THERE are indeed writers of great authority, who think we may *demonſtrate* the goodneſs of our Creator from the marks and effects of goodneſs diſcernible in his works. When this is once done, we need not, they ſay, pay any regard to contrary appearances; for that difficulties are not to be urged againſt demonſtration.—Certainly they are not. But in the preſent caſe, it is to be feared, the term is miſapplied. For we ſhall not be juſtified, on any ſound principles of logic, in drawing an univerſal concluſion from a partial and imperfect view. The intention of our Maker is to be collected from the *whole* ſyſtem of nature; ſo far at leaſt as falls within our obſervation: not from detached parts of it. We have no right therefore to form any judgment about it, till the *evils*, as well as the *goods*, of life, have been fully conſidered.

THE other method of arguing, viz. from the *prepollency* of good, ſtands indeed on a wider, but not perhaps a ſurer, bottom. It is difficult for a man to eſtimate any *ſingle* pleaſure or pain, felt by another man: ſtill more difficult to compute the *ſum* of his pleaſures or pains, and then to balance the account. How then ſhall we be able to eſtimate the clear amount, whether of happineſs or miſery, among the

the whole race of mankind; eſpecially if it be conſidered, how very ſmall a part of our ſpecies falls directly under our obſervation?

It may be more ſatisfactory then to conſider ſeparately the various *cauſes* of pleaſure and pain: and to examine how far theſe oppoſite *effects* were *deſigned* or *accidental*; i. e. whether either or both were *ultimate ends* *. If the conſtitution and laws of *every* part of nature appear ultimately intended to produce good; it cannot but be the joint intention of *all* the parts. Nor ſhall we have any ſufficient reaſon to reject this concluſion, if *many* of the phænomena, not all, ſhew an intention of producing good: and *no* part, or circumſtance, ſhew an intention of producing evil except only in *ſubordination* to good; which, to the purpoſe of our preſent inquiry, is in truth no exception at all.

Not only we may diſcover the intention of nature by contemplating the ſeveral *parts* of the univerſe, and the *reſpective* laws to which each of them is ſubject: but the more *general* laws, which extend through God's *whole* adminiſtration, may with great probability be urged as proofs of good or of evil intention.—Even the propriety

* By the word *ultimate* we only mean the laſt *diſcernible* intention. Our preſent ſtate *may* have reference to other ſtates and other ſyſtems. But this being unknown, proves nothing for, or againſt, the divine goodneſs.

propriety of governing *at all* by fixed and ſettled laws, is a very material ſubject of inquiry: and it may alſo ſeem to many both a doubtful and an important queſtion, how far it is conceivable, that a benevolent author of nature ſhould permit the good effect of theſe laws to be *oppoſed* and *defeated* by the folly and perverſeneſs of human agents. When theſe inquiries are finiſhed, we ſhall then come with advantage to conſider the actual *reſult* of the various branches of divine adminiſtration.

PART

PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE ſame obſervations, which ſhew, that the phænomena of nature are produced with deſign, uſually determine in each particular caſe *what* that deſign was. But the particular effects being innumerable, the immediate ends of them muſt be alſo innumerable. Theſe effects however being many of them ſimilar, the ends propoſed muſt be alſo ſimilar. Theſe ends then, as well as the phænomena themſelves, are capable of being reduced under certain *general heads:* that is, they may be diſtributed into various *claſſes*, like effects, or like ends, being thrown into the ſame claſs. It is thus we determine the *laws* which direct the conſtitution of nature, as well as the *views* with which it is ſo conſtituted and governed.

As

As a great number of theſe general *laws* may often be reſolved into one ſtill *more* general; ſo a number of *deſigns* may be alſo referred to a yet *higher* deſign, in which they are all included: and it is the buſineſs of philoſophers to reduce both to as few and as ſimple principles as they can.

We are firſt then to reduce the various intentions diſcernible in the conſtitution and courſe of nature to a few general principles; and then to comprehend theſe, if that appear to be poſſible, under one *more* general and ſimple principle.

Now the various intentions diſcernible in the works of Nature, are all reducible to theſe two;

1. To produce a regular ſucceſſion of men and animals; including the birth, temporary preſervation, decay, and diſſolution of each individual.

2. To furniſh them with the means and occaſions of exerciſing their various powers of perception and action.

It will appear from a very ſlight induction, that theſe intentions concur in the various works of nature; and it will alſo appear, that the firſt is ſubordinate to the ſecond.

PARTICULARS.

1. VERY many *vegetables* are relative to theſe purpoſes; being deſigned in part for the ſubſiſtence of men and animals, and in part for the various uſes of life.

2. *Foſſils* and *minerals* were deſigned for the uſe of man *.

3. *Springs* and *rivers* are deſigned for the ſubſiſtence and uſe both of men and animals; for promoting alſo the fertility of the earth, i. e. the production of vegetables; and in this way alſo for the ſervice of men and animals.

4. THE *earth* was deſigned for an habitation to men and animals: alſo for the production of foſſils, minerals, vegetables.

5. THE *ſea* was deſigned as a habitation for innumerable tribes of fiſhes; for the production alſo of vapours, which fall in rain, producing vegetables for the uſe of men and animals.

6. THE *ſun* and *moon* are both mediately and immediately neceſſary for the ſubſiſtence and uſe of animals, and eſpecially of men.

7. THE

* So ſays Cicero (de Nat. Deor. lib. 1 1, c. 64.) Nec vero ſupra terram, ſed etiam in intimis ejus tenebris plurimarum rerum latet utilitas; quæ, ad uſum hominum orta, ab hominibus ſolis invenitur.

7. THE formation of *men* and other *animals* was plainly intended for the temporary production of ſenſe and motion: for continuing theſe powers during a limited time of uncertain extent; for tranſmitting them in ſucceſſion from one individual to another.

WITH what view now are theſe ſeveral ſucceſſions of men and animals produced and preſerved? Doubtleſs with a deſign that they ſhould *live*; *i. e.* perceive and act in various ways. And to what purpoſe are the ſeveral individuals deſtroyed? Without queſtion, to make way for others, that theſe alſo may perceive and act. There may indeed be *other* intentions. But this, *of itſelf*, will account for all the phænomena. For the deſign of cauſing a variety of perceptions and actions, evidently includes and preſuppoſes the deſign of producing and preſerving; and a deſign of tranſmitting life to a new race of beings, equally includes the deſign of removing, if not of deſtroying, thoſe which already exiſt on the ſame globe.—*Perception* then and *action*, in various kinds, include all the known intentions of the Author of Nature.—But this perhaps may require farther illuſtration. Let us then conſider the ſubject a little more particularly.

1. AN animal body is a machine endued with various powers of ſenſe and motion; and many of the parts of which it conſiſts (perhaps all of them) are ſubſervient either to the

the *exiſtence* of theſe powers, or to the *uſe* of them.

2. It is a general law of the animal creation, that theſe powers muſt be *exerciſed* in order to their preſervation: not only becauſe they are ſtrengthened by a proper uſe of them, but becauſe, if we ſhould neglect to uſe them, life itſelf could not be ſuſtained; the motive powers being evidently neceſſary for obtaining thoſe gratifications of ſenſe, which are the means of ſupporting the whole machine, and ſo of continuing the powers thus employed.

3. But, as Nature has provided for the employment of theſe powers with a view to their continuance, ſo alſo for their continuance with a view to their actual employment.

4. Yet it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe that theſe ends are reciprocal. To ſay we exiſt merely for the ſake of perception and action, yet perceive and act for the ſake of continuing our exiſtence, is to ſay, that the animal machine is formed for no purpoſe at all. One of theſe ends muſt be *principally* intended; the other purely *ſubordinate*.

5. It would be abſurd to ſuppoſe that the end principally intended is preſervation; and that perception and action are ſubordinate to it: for this is only to ſay, that theſe effects are conſtantly produced, for the ſake of making it

poſſible,

poſſible, that they ſhould be *repeated*. Whereas, if the *actual* repetition of them be indifferent, the poſſibility of repetition can be no purpoſe at all.

6. The powers however of ſenſe and motion may both be conſidered as occaſions of our preſervation, and alſo as occaſions of our pleaſures and pains; and the pleaſures and pains reſulting from them either as *ſubordinate* to our preſervation, or as being themſelves the *principal* ends, for the ſake of which we are produced and preſerved. For there is no abſurdity in ſuppoſing, that the very ſame ſenſations, which were principally intended, ſhould alſo be made ſubordinate to our preſervation, and ſo become the occaſions of reproducing themſelves.

In conſequence of theſe remarks we may now ſet aſide the firſt of thoſe general intentions, which were above pointed out, and conſider *perception* and *action* as the *ſole* ends (within the compaſs of human reaſon) propoſed by the Author of Nature.

But we may advance one ſtep farther than this. For the actions of men and other animals are the *cauſes* of perception to the agent and to others; and are frequently alſo the cauſes of production, preſervation, and deſtruction. Theſe then are to be conſidered as *ſubordinate* to

to perception, which we may fairly conclude to be the ultimate end in the contemplation of our Maker.

THE only queſtion remaining is, What *kind* of perception was intended by the Author of Nature, whether pleaſant, or painful, or both.

Now the fact is, that men, and all other animals, have perception of *both* kinds; and from the frame of their nature, and the circumſtances in which they are placed, ſuch perceptions muſt have been foreſeen. But, conſiſtently with this fact, and the foreknowledge of it, three ſuppoſitions may be made.

1. THAT the pleaſures and pains, ariſing from the conſtitution of Nature, were *equally* intended by its author: *i. e.* he was induced to make things, as they are, by *both* motives; or both pleaſure and pain were *ultimate ends*. On this ſuppoſition God is a *capricious* being.

2. THAT the *pleaſures only* were intended; and that the pains are accidental conſequences attending the means of producing pleaſure: *i. e.* the pains ariſing in the preſent ſyſtem of things are *not* ultimate ends; but unhappy appendages of a ſcheme formed with no other deſign than the production of good. On this ſuppoſition, God is a *benevolent* being.—Or

3. That the *pains only* were intended; the pleaſures being nothing more than accidental conſequences of the means uſed for cauſing pain: *i. e.* the pleaſures are not ultimate ends, but neceſſary parts of a ſcheme deſigned purely for the production of evil. On this ſuppoſition God is a *malevolent* being.

Now, previous to a particular enquiry, we may point out perhaps ſome circumſtances, which will form a ſtrong preſumptive proof in favour of the *ſecond* of theſe ſuppoſitions.

1. It is more probable that God is *good* than *capricious*; becauſe the courſe of Nature is *uniform*. Whatever events befall us, good or bad, ariſe from certain *general* principles in the conſtitution and government of the univerſe. Now, from the nature of a world ſo framed, and a government ſo conducted, many events would be likely to happen, contrary to the intention of its Author. But it is *not* likely, that a capricious Being ſhould be conſtant and uniform in his methods of acting; when the ends of his adminiſtration would be at leaſt equally well anſwered by variety and diſorder.

2. It is more probable, that God is *good* than *evil*. For evil, as far as we can judge, is more likely to be *accidental*. This appears from experience in the conduct of men; who uſually act with a deſign of producing good either to themſelves or to others. The evil they do is often

often indeed foreſeen, but ſeldom deſired or purſued as the ultimate end of action. This analogy is not to be ſlighted. Whoever admits the uſual proofs of a deſigning cauſe of the univerſe, muſt allow us to argue, ſo we do it with proper caution, from *human* deſigns to *divine*. But there is ſtill ſomething more in the caſe here. For the production of good requires *uniform* conduct: and he who acts by rule will of courſe ſometimes produce effects *not intended*. The intention therefore of producing good may, by accident, occaſion evil. But the *contrary* intention will ſcarce ever occaſion good: becauſe evil, for the moſt part, may eaſily be produced, without obſerving any rule at all; and often the *more* eaſily on that very account.—Add to this, that a good deſign is in every view more *difficult* to be executed, than an evil one; and therefore is more likely to be executed *imperfectly*: i. e. with a mixture of effects foreign to the deſign or oppoſite to it*.

* When theſe papers were firſt drawn up, it was believed, that the three ſuppoſitions above-mentioned were the only ſuppoſitions which could poſſibly be made by one who admits the unity of God. But a late writer has invented a fourth, viz. that *neither* our pleaſure nor pains were ultimately intended by the Author of Nature. He is ſuppoſed to be void of benevolence and void of malice.—This is totally repugnant to all the experience *we* have of the conduct of intelligent beings. Could it be admitted at all, it would, in a great degree, ſubvert the evidence of a deſigning cauſe at the head of the univerſe; a concluſion, which reſts on this principle,

It is perhaps needleſs to obſerve that all this reaſoning preſuppoſes the divine Unity: a truth, as it ſeems, eaſily deducible from the *ſimilitude* of deſign, and the *unity* of deſign, which appear in the works of nature. But this ſubject is not within the compaſs of our preſent inquiry.

We may now therefore proceed more directly and particularly to examine and lay open the ſubject before us—viz.

Whether the ſeveral parts of the univerſe, and the laws to which they are ſubject, were deſigned by the author of them for the production of Good. In other words, whether the ſucceſſive exiſtence, perceptions, and actions, of the various animals which inhabit the globe, and the cauſes on which they depend, all of them proceeding from the *intention* of their maker, be reducible to a *higher*, or *more general* intention, viz. the production of happineſs.

Now, 1. The *birth* and *preſervation* of animals *may* be referred to this end, or may, with equal

principle, that *uſefulneſs* is a mark of deſign. It is true, indeed, that men, in moſt of their deſigns, mean only to be uſeful to *themſelves*: and, in ſome of them, aim at *miſchief* to others. But *all* their deſigns have a view to the *feelings* of ſenſible Beings; and we cannot ſo much as imagine an elaborate ſcheme to be formed and executed, without even a wiſh, that any perſon living ſhould either be the better or the worſe for it.

equal probability, be referred to an oppoſite end; viz. the production of miſery. For neither happineſs nor miſery can be produced, unleſs animals *begin* to live and *continue* to live. The judgment therefore to be formed on this part of the conſtitution of things depend on the *ſtate* and *condition* allotted to ſenſible Beings in the preſent ſyſtem. If they are intended for a happy ſtate, their production and preſervation were inſtances of goodneſs; if for a miſerable ſtate, were inſtances of malevolence. Birth and Preſervation are neither good nor evil.—In like manner

2. THE *death* of animals is, *of itſelf*, neither good nor evil: not to the individual, unleſs you previouſly determine, whether its life were happy or miſerable; not to the ſpecies on *any* ſuppoſition. For there is juſt as much benevolence in communicating happineſs, and as much malevolence in communicating miſery, to a *ſucceſſion* of Beings, as in confining it perpetually to the *ſame* Beings. What one loſes, another gains.

To judge then of the general principle, which includes all the ends diſcernible in the conſtitution of things, we muſt conſider the nature and condition of men and other animals; during their abode on this globe: i. e. whether their frame and circumſtances be adapted to make them happy or miſerable.—In the purſuit of this inquiry it will be fit to conſider, 1. The conſti-

conſtitution of the bodies of animals: 2. The external cauſes which are capable of affecting them: 3. The powers and faculties of the human mind: 4. The mutual dependence of men and other animals: 5. The mutual dependence of mankind.

PREVIOUS REMARK.

AN intention of producing good will be ſufficiently apparent in any particular inſtance, if the thing conſidered can neither be changed nor taken away, without loſs or harm, *all other things continuing the ſame.* Should you ſuppoſe *various* things in the ſyſtem changed *at once*, you can neither judge of the poſſibility, nor the conſequences, of the change, having no degree of experience to direct you.

THIS remark is to be carried along through the *whole* proof of divine benevolence.

I.

Of the bodies of men and other animals.

THESE may be conſidered in two views: either in reference to preſervation and deſtruction, or to ſenſe and motion.

1. *Of preſervation and deſtruction.*

I. THAT

I. That nature has uſed fit means for the preſervation and ſucceſſion of animals, is, as we have juſt ſeen, no argument of benevolence. The appetites therefore, which are given for that purpoſe, determine nothing. Whatever end be propoſed by the author of nature, individuals *muſt* be preſerved, and the ſpecies continued. On ſuppoſition therefore of good, or of ill, deſign, hunger, thirſt, &c. are equally neceſſary.

II. On the other hand, the *inſufficiency* of theſe means is no argument of malevolence. Thus the frailty of our bodies, which makes them in many ways liable to deſtruction, and ſure of being deſtroyed in time, will evidently determine nothing in the preſent queſtion. For this only ſhews, that the life of each individual was deſigned to have *ſome limit*, and that limit *uncertain*: a deſign, at leaſt equally conſiſtent with a good or evil principle of action.

But tho' no concluſion can be drawn from the *accompliſhment* of theſe ends, or the *degree* in which they are accompliſhed; yet the *manner* of doing it may furniſh us with ſome remarks.

III. When we conſider the ſubject in this view, two circumſtances eſpecially may ſeem to deſerve our notice.

1ſt.

1ſt, THAT all animals are intruſted with the care of preſerving *themſelves*, and continuing their *ſpecies*.

2dly. THAT we are excited to diſcharge theſe offices by reward and puniſhment.—Thus the neglect of taking ſuſtenance is puniſhed by the ſenſations of appetite: either neglect or exceſs is puniſhed by ſickneſs: inattention to danger by external pains. We are often too, reſtrained from the uſe of improper food by diſagreeable ſenſations.* On the other hand, all the gratifications of ſenſe within certain limits, may be conſidered as rewards.

Now the *firſt* of theſe circumſtances will determine nothing. For it has only theſe two effects; to make our exiſtence more *precarious*, and to give occaſion for the exerciſe of our *active* faculties. Indeed, *both* circumſtances are included under certain general laws, to be conſidered hereafter, viz. That the happineſs of men, and other animals, is made to depend on their *actions*; and that they are obliged to *perform* theſe actions under the *double* ſanction of rewards and puniſhments.

AT preſent therefore I ſhall only ſtay to obſerve, that the *rewards*, by which we are led to uſe the means of preſervation, &c. are a ſtrong preſumption of benevolence. Preſervation indeed and ſucceſſion were equally neceſ-

ſary

* See Butler's Analogy, Part I.

ſary on either ſuppoſition; and the acts, of which we are ſpeaking, are the neceſſary means, by which thoſe ends are to be obtained. But the pleaſures attending them are *not* neceſſary. The appetites *alone* may ſeem to have been a ſufficient inducement. Whatever pleaſure therefore we find in gratifying them, beſides the removal of an uneaſy ſenſation, is a good plainly *intended* for us by the Author of Nature. The ſenſes, which produce this pleaſure, *could* not have been ſpared, without leſſening our happineſs: and *might* have been ſpared, without diſcouraging us from preſerving ourſelves and continuing our ſpecies. It is clear, therefore, that the Author of Nature deſigned, in this inſtance, to add to our happineſs.

Can a ſimilar argument be uſed to eſtabliſh the *oppoſite* concluſion? I think not. But it will be more convenient to defer this ſubject, till we come to ſpeak of the *more general* laws of divine adminiſtration. One objection however occurs, which it may be proper juſt to touch upon in this place.

Obj. It is alleged, that the uneaſy ſenſation of appetite, in many caſes, ſtill continues, after the wants of nature have been ſupplied; i. e. when it becomes uſeleſs or hurtful; and that, on the other hand, agreeable perceptions are often annexed to *exceſſive* gratification.

Anſ.

Anſ. To this objection I ſhall only anſwer at preſent, that we are in no ſort competent judges, how far it was *poſſible* for the palates and ſtomachs of animals to be differently framed. We complain perhaps of an evil, which admits no remedy; or none but what is worſe than the diſeaſe.

What more remains to be ſaid on the ſubject will fall under *another* general law of our nature; viz. That we are often excited to *hurtful*, as well as beneficial, actions.

IV. But as the means of *preſervation* furniſh no proof of benevolence; ſo neither do the means of *deſtruction* furniſh any proof of an *oppoſite* principle. It is only the *manner* in which we are deſtroyed, on which any argument can be founded. On this head three things are obſervable; that the time of dying is various and uncertain; that it may be haſtened or delayed by the act of the animal itſelf, or of other animals; and that death is uſually preceded by pain and ſickneſs.

1ſt. The firſt of theſe obſervations affords an inſtance of benevolence. For the conſtant foreſight of death would render life unhappy*.

2d.

* Οἶμαι δὲ κὴ τὴν φύσιν, ὁρῶσαν τότ' ἄτακτον, κὴ βραχυχρόνιον τῆ βίᾳ, ἄδηλον ποιῆσαι τὴν τε θανάτε προθεσμίαν, τῦτο γὰρ ἦν ἄμεινον. Εἰ γὰρ προϊδείμεν, κὰν προεξετήκοντό τινες ταῖς λύπαις, κὴ πρὶν ἀποθανεῖν, ἐτεθνήκεσαν. Plut. Conſ. ad Apoll.

2d. The second of them is included in those very general laws, to which we have often occasion to refer, that the happiness of men is made to depend on their actions, and the happiness of one man on the actions of another.

3d. Nor can it be said that the third affords any just presumption of malevolence. For pain and sickness inform us of our danger: prevent us from increasing the mischiefs, which threaten us, by our own misconduct: and often too give room for proper care and fit remedies, by which our lives may be prolonged. This constitution therefore serves to lengthen the time of our existence; and, if our state here be, on the whole, a desirable state, contributes to our good *.

It seems then that the methods used by nature, for preserving and destroying animal bodies, afford some proof of benevolent intention, none of the contrary.—Let us hear, however, what may be urged on the other side.

Now, allowing that pain is useful, by giving us notice of our danger,

Obj. 1. It may be supposed perhaps, that some *other* kind of notice might have been given,

* Μὴ γὰρ νοσοῖμεν—νοσήσασι δὲ παρίη τις αἴσθησις εἴτ' οὖν τέμνοντό τι τῶν ἡμετέρων, εἴτ' ἀποσπῶτο. Τὸ γὰρ ἀνώδυνον τοῦτο οὐκ ἄνευ μεγάλων ἐκγίνεται μισθῶν τῳ ἀνθρώπῳ. Plut. Ib.

given, and ought to have been preferred. But this ſuppoſition, being wholly imaginary, without any ſort of foundation to reſt upon, may be ſafely paſſed over.

Obj. 2. It may more plauſibly be alledged, that the notice is often given, where it muſt needs prove *ineffectual*. For the uneaſy ſenſations, deſigned for our preſervation, are felt *univerſally*; even in theſe inſtances, where we *cannot* be preſerved. But,

1ſt. How do we know that it was *poſſible* for the uneaſy ſenſations to be confined and reſtrained to thoſe particular caſes, in which they are capable of producing their full effect? or, if poſſible, that ſuch reſtraint would not have been attended with greater loſs or harm?

2dly. We may obſerve, that, as knowledge increaſes in the world, the number of *remedies* increaſes, both againſt outward pains and ſickneſs: and that the pains men ſuffer, make them more cautious, and more attentive to diſcover *new* remedies. Fewer inſtances therefore are likely to occur hereafter in which theſe admonitions will prove ineffectual: and the time *may* come, when the effect of them will become *conſtant*: and no ſpecies will remain of painful accidents either inevitable or incurable.

3dly. The *general* principle, of annexing pain to the means of deſtruction, evidently tends

tends to our preſervation: and it is this general tendency, of which we now inquire. As to the *conſtancy* of the laws of nature, in this inſtance and in others, it will be the ſubject of a diſtinct inquiry.

Obj. 3. THOUGH neither the uncertainty of life, nor the penalties by which men and other animals are compelled to preſerve it, afford any evidence of malevolence, when taken *ſeparately*; yet taken *together*, they afford a ſtrong proof of malevolent intention. For the frailty of our bodies *continually* expoſes us to danger; and therefore we need *frequent* admonitions, *i. e.* frequent pains. God therefore *intended* that our preſent condition ſhould be exceedingly liable to pain.—But,

1ſt. To make this objection concluſive, it muſt be ſuppoſed, that ſome *change* could be made in the bodies of animals, which would render them *leſs* frail than they are, without deſtroying the means of their preſervation and happineſs; a ſuppoſition altogether deſtitute of proof.

2dly. THOUGH our bodies are made *liable* to pain, yet *actual* pain cannot, with any degree of propriety, be conſidered as an object of divine intention. For, if you conſider ſeparately the parts of an animal body, each will appear to be *intended* for ſome uſeful end. There is no evidence that any of them were framed on *purpoſe* to give pain, or on purpoſe

to

to be put out of order. Whenever ſuch diſorders happen, they may always be referred to ſome general principle, of apparent utility in other inſtances.

Obj. 4. It would be better for us, that the accidents, which cauſe our deſtruction, ſhould be without pain and without remedy, than that we ſhould be continually expoſed to ſuch a variety of evils, as a warning only to preſerve ourſelves.—But,

Anſw. This objection preſuppoſes, what is at leaſt uncertain, that the ills of life exceed the goods. For, if life be deſirable upon the whole, it is eligible to ſuffer thoſe pains, which are the means of prolonging it.—This may not indeed be applicable to every individual. It is enough, if it hold good with regard to the *uſual* ſtate and condition of ſenſible beings.

The chief obſervations which have occurred to us on this ſubject, may be ſummed up in one general argument; which will be diſpatched in a few lines.

Our nature contains *various* capacities of enjoying pleaſure, which appear in no reſpect neceſſary for any *bad* end. But it contains *no* capacities of ſuffering pain, which are not apparently neceſſary for ſome *good* end. *Uſeleſs evil* is a thing never ſeen, unleſs in ſuch inſtances,

ſtances, as are comprehended under a principle *generally* uſeful. Our nature therefore affords *ſome* evidence of an intention to produce good: *no* evidence, ſo far as we have yet ſeen, of any intention *terminating* in evil.

2. *Of ſenſe and motion.*

I. The bodily *ſenſes* afford a preſumptive proof of benevolent intention. They are means of pleaſure and of information. Not one of them can be taken from us, without evident loſs and harm.

Some of them give *immediate* pleaſure, as the ſmell and taſte: others may be conſidered as *avenues* of pleaſure, as the ſight and hearing, which lead us to the more refined enjoyment of beauty and harmony*. All of them introduce ideas, the materials of *mental* pleaſures: all of them enable us to obtain pleaſure, and avoid pain, by informing us of the occaſions of each.

Our

* Primum enim *oculi* in his artibus, quarum judicium eſt oculorum, in pictis, fictis, cœlatiſque formis, in corporum etiam motione, geſtu, multa cernunt ſubtilius: colorum etiam atque figuratum venuſtatem atque ordinem, &, ut ita dicem, decentiam, oculi judicant —*Auriumque* item eſt admirabile quoddam, artificioſumque judicium, quo judicatur——varietas ſonorum, intervallu, &c. quæ hominum ſolum auribus judicantur. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. ii. c. 58.

OUR capacity of perceiving pain cannot be urged in abatement of this evidence. Even the *diſagreeable* ſenſations, as we have already ſeen, are not without their uſe. They inform us uſually, what would be prejudicial to us, and ſerve to put us on our guard. No man therefore would wiſh to be without them.

WE have no ſtronger inſtance of benevolence among men, than the affection of parents to their children. And, would not every parent wiſh, that his children may have their ſenſes complete? Would he chuſe, that any part of their bodies ſhould be inſenſible of pain? Certainly not. We ſee then, that a benevolent affection would lead us, if we ourſelves were to determine, to produce animal bodies with the ſame powers of ſenſation, which are given by the Author of Nature. We have reaſon therefore to conclude, that *he* alſo acts with benevolent intention.

II. THE *motive* powers of the body are evidently uſeful. Without them we ſhould want a conſiderable part of our active faculties; and be unable to procure the objects, which gratify our ſenſes.

LET it be remembered, however, that the powers of ſenſe and motion are not conſidered here, as means of *preſervation*, but as means of procuring and enjoying a variety of pleaſures not *neceſſary* to us, and of avoiding pains not *deſtruc-*

deſtructive to us. Though the capacity of preſerving ourſelves ſhould prove nothing; yet the capacity of enjoying theſe additional pleaſures will evidently prove a benevolent deſign; for it will prove a deſign of giving a *happy* exiſtence, diſtinct from the general intention of providing the *means* of exiſtence. So alſo every faculty, by which we are enabled to avoid pains, *not deſtructive* to the body, ſhews, that theſe pains are contrary to the divine intention; and conſequently, that this intention was benevolent.

II.

Of the external cauſes, which are capable of affecting animal bodies.

THESE may conveniently be claſſed under two heads: on one hand the cauſes of preſervation and pleaſure; on the other, of deſtruction and pain.

1. *Of preſervation and pleaſure.*

ON this head we muſt purſue the ſame courſe of reaſoning as we did on the laſt.—It is an undoubted fact, that nature has made a ſufficient proviſion for the ſuſtenance and preſervation of animals: ſo that all of them are capable of obtaining thoſe objects, which are requiſite for the ſupport of their lives.—But this fact, of itſelf, proves nothing. It *could* not

be otherwiſe, than it is, whether the intention of our Maker was good or evil.

It is more material to obſerve, that the cauſes of preſervation are *alſo* cauſes of pleaſure; and that various means of pleaſure are provided, no ways neceſſary to our preſervation.—Thus the ſeveral ſorts of *food* are made agreeable to the palate; of *flowers* to the ſmell; of *ſound* to the ear; of *viſible* objects to the eye: and many alſo of the works of nature are *beautiful*, as well as uſeful; and furniſhed with ſuch qualities, as enable men, in various ways, to multiply their pleaſures, and live conveniently and happily. —Now all theſe means of happineſs are preſumptions of benevolence. For they apparently tend to produce pleaſure; and have no apparent ill tendency in any way whatever.

Obj. It may be ſaid indeed, that theſe external advantages are too *ſcarce* for the uſe of *all:* nay that a very great part of mankind have comparatively but a ſmall ſhare. But,

1ſt. We may obſerve, in anſwer to this objection, that *many* conveniences are *not* ſcarce *. Even the loweſt order of men poſſeſs more than

* Paſſim jacent *alimenta*, quæ rerum natura omnibus locis depoſuit. (Sen. de Conſ. ad Helvid. c. 9.)

And again (c. 11.) Nihil homini natura, quod *neceſſarium* faciebat, fecit *operoſum*.

than is neceſſary for their ſubſiſtence, and have alſo real and conſtant pleaſure in the uſe of thoſe things which their neceſſities require: greater perhaps than often falls to the lot of thoſe who are more plentifully provided. Now, this is enough to prove a benevolent intention. The objection only ſhews, if it ſhew any thing, that we can *conceive* a conſtitution of things, in which *greater* benevolence would have appeared: a concluſion with which we have at preſent no concern.

2dly. THOSE conveniences which are ſcarce, are not the moſt *important* to our happineſs. Often indeed they derive all their value from their ſcarcity †. To make them common, would be to make them contemptible.

3dly. SCARCITY is only a relative term, importing that ſome have more than others.—But this circumſtance is of no weight in the preſent queſtion. For there may be juſt as much benevolence in an unequal, as an equal, diſtribution of things. It may ſtill be true that God is kind to all, though ſome have received peculiar marks of kindneſs.

† O miſerabilis, quorum palatum, niſi ad *pretioſos* cibos, non excitatur! pretioſos autem non eximius ſapor, aut aliqua faucium dulcedo, ſed raritas et difficultas parandi fecit. Ib. c. 9.

4thly. The word *ſcarcity* is alſo relative to human *deſires*. There is much want among the rich: much content among the poor. The objection amounts only to this, that men have *ſome* deſires not ſatisfied; *i. e.* that they are *not contented*.—But the means are in their own power *.

5thly. That very inequality of which we complain, conduces to the general happineſs. The ſuppoſition of univerſal plenty is inconſiſtent: for it would prevent *labour*, the *neceſſary* means of plenty.

But this very circumſtance may be thought by ſome to be a freſh cauſe of complaint. It has been called a *hardſhip*.

Obj. 2. That the advantages of life are not uſually to be obtained without *induſtry*.

In anſwer to this objection, it might be ſufficient to refer the reader to that general law of our nature, which makes the happineſs of men depend on their actions. But a more direct anſwer ſhall be given under the following obſervations:

1ſt.

* Cupiditati nihil ſatis eſt: naturæ ſatis eſt etiam parum. (Sen. de Conſ. ad Helvid. c. 11.) Again: Non fortunæ iſte vitio, ſed ſuo, pauper eſt.—Animus eſt, qui divites facit. See alſo the ſtory of *Apicius* (c. 10.) cui ſeſtertium centies egeſtas fuit. I nunc & puta *pecuniæ* modum ad rem pertinere, non *animi*.

1ſt. That induſtry is *no evil*, unleſs by accident. Both the mind and body are ſo framed, that a proper exertion of their faculties is not attended with pain; ſo that there is no *general* inconvenience in annexing this condition to the acquiſition of good.

2dly. In thoſe caſes, where inconveniences ariſe from exceſſive application, *ſome* compenſation is made by the ſubſequent pleaſure of *reſt*.

3dly. That conſtitution of things which makes induſtry neceſſary, tends to *prevent* evil, not to produce it. For want of employment would, in many different ways, make men unhappy.

4thly. The exerciſe of our various faculties, whether for attaining the neceſſaries or pleaſures of life, is naturally *pleaſant*. Many indeed of our higheſt enjoyments conſiſt in action. Therefore this conſtitution of things, by engaging us to act, promotes our happineſs.

5thly. The *improvement* of our faculties depends on the exerciſe of them; and, without queſtion, the *more* they are improved, the greater good we derive from them.—And,

6thly. It may be juſt worth mentioning, that good things, of whatever kind, obtained by our own induſtry, give us peculiar pleaſure.

They

THEY who are not convinced by theſe reaſons, may attend, if they pleaſe, to the moſt faithful pictures, that are extant, of human life. *Poets* perhaps may deſcribe it more juſtly than *Philoſophers*. To *Virgil* * therefore and *Milton* † let the appeal be made. You may expect in them to find the ſubject adorned and embelliſhed. But you cannot ſuppoſe their deſcriptions to be *oppoſite* to truth, and directly repugnant to that *nature*, which they profeſs to imitate. See then whether the *labours of the country* are painted by thoſe inimitable writers in the ſame frightful forms, under which they appear in the writings of ſceptical philoſophers. On the contrary, chearfulneſs and innocence are the moſt ſtriking features in the admirable portraits they have given us. The huſbandman and ſhepherd are repreſented as happy even in their daily *toils*; and happy too in the *reſt* which ſucceeds them.—We are told indeed, that induſtry is but ill ſuited to the natural *indolence* of man. But it may be ſaid, with greater appearance of truth, that idleneſs is ill ſuited to his natural activity. If ſome men are too indolent; others are too buſy. The generality *love* to be employed: and they, whoſe condition in life places them above the *neceſſity* of labouring, uſually impoſe on themſelves a *voluntary* labour, in one kind or other, under the name of *pleaſure*.—One would have thought, that men who have a taſte for French

* Georg. lib. 2. † L'Allegro.

French books, and French manners, could not have been altogether unacquainted with the ſentiment of *ennui*; of which that reſtleſs people talk ſo much, and which, above all things, they profeſs to dread.

Obj. 3. INDUSTRY itſelf is not *ſecure* of its reward. The man who labours to ſupport himſelf and his family, may yet want not only the pleaſures and conveniences, but even the *neceſſaries* of life.

THIS circumſtance however affords no preſumption of malevolence. For,

1ſt. ACCORDING to the *general* courſe of nature, induſtry is the appointed means of obtaining all the advantages of life: and here, as in other inſtances, we are to judge of a deſign from its regular and *cuſtomary* effects. The exceptions only ſhew, that it is *imperfectly* executed.

2dly. THE wants, which ariſe from theſe accidental diſappointments, are not unfrequently the occaſion of good: as affording room for beneficent actions, which in many different ways, promote our happineſs.

BUT it is needleſs to purſue this objection any farther. For this ſeeming irregularity proceeds from two cauſes, to be conſidered in another place: viz. the mutual dependence of mankind,

mankind, and the uniform government of the material world.

2. *Of deſtruction and pain.*

1. EXPERIENCE ſhews, that a variety of external cauſes are capable of *deſtroying* us. In the air, lightning, cold, heat, peſtilence; on the earth, poiſons, wild beaſts, ſerpents: under the earth are laid up the materials, which produce eruptions, and earthquakes: the water alſo may be fatal to land-animals: accidental cauſes are innumerable. Every part of nature contains, as it were the ſeeds of deſtruction.

IT is needleſs to inſiſt on the poſſible, or probable, uſes, which ſome, or all, of theſe things are capable of ſerving. At all events they afford no preſumption of malevolence. For all animals are deſigned to *die*: the *manner* of dying is immaterial.

2. IT is equally evident, that many external cauſes are capable of producing *pain*. But it is not evident, and not probable, that any one of them was *deſigned* to produce it; unleſs with a view to our preſervation and happineſs. In many inſtances pain gives us notice of danger; the reſt are accidental conſequences of good general laws; of laws which cannot be altered without greater harm.

ON

On the whole, we may affirm, that the inanimate parts of the creation furniſh us with many advantages, not apparently neceſſary to any *ill* deſign: and expoſe us to no diſadvantages, but what are either directly ſubſervient to *good*, or accidental conſequences of *laws* evidently beneficial. They afford therefore *ſome* preſumption of benevolence, *none* of malevolence.

It may not perhaps be uſeleſs, in this place to recollect the circumſtances, within and without us, which have afforded us preſumptions of divine benevolence. The force of them in this contracted view may more diſtinctly appear.

RECAPITULATION.

1. The *Appetites* and *Senſes*, being immediately neceſſary to the preſervation of the individual, and continuance of the ſpecies, are ſo far no marks of benevolence. But the capacities we enjoy of receiving *agreeable* ſenſations imply a *farther* deſign than this. For the ends juſt mentioned might have been as fully accompliſhed by painful ſenſations only; or, it may be, without any ſenſations at all. Whereas,

1ſt. The gratification of our *appetites* not only removes pain, but gives poſitive pleaſure.

2dly.

2dly. The ſenſes of *ſight* and *hearing* are avenues both to their proper pleaſures, and to others; as of beauty, and harmony.

3dly. All the ſenſes enable us to *find* and to *attain* objects of agreeable ſenſation, and to avoid the contrary.

It is needleſs to apply this reaſoning to our motive powers. They are not only neceſſary to our preſervation, but they contribute greatly to our pleaſure.

We conclude therefore, on the whole, that the conſtitution and frame of our bodies affords a ſtrong preſumption of benevolence.

11. In like manner, the correſponding proviſion of *external* things may alſo be conſidered as neceſſary to the preſervation of life. We could ſcarce ſubſiſt, eſpecially in the colder climates, if materials were not provided us for clothes and houſes: and we are incapable of ſubſiſting at all without food.

But, tho' no concluſion can be drawn from the bare ſupply of our neceſſities, yet the *liberal** ſupply

* Sed illa quanta benignitas naturæ, quod tam *multa* ad veſcendum, tam *varia* & *jucunda*, gignit? neque ea uno tempore anni, ut ſemper & novitate delectemur & copiâ. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. ii. c. 53.

Neque enim *neceſſitatibus* tantum modò noſtris proviſum eſt, uſque in *delicias* amamur. Sen. de Benef. lib. iv. c. 5.—But ſee the whole of the 4th, 5th, and 6th chapters.

ſupply of them is a conſideration of great weight. The proviſion, which is made, of a variety of objects, *not* neceſſary to life, and miniſtering only to our pleaſures: and the properties given to the neceſſaries of life themſelves, by which they contribute to pleaſure *as well* as preſervation: theſe things plainly ſhew a farther deſign than that of giving us exiſtence; a deſign of giving us a *happy* exiſtence.

III.

Of the human mind.

THE faculties of the mind may not improperly be reduced to three: the underſtanding, the will, and the paſſions.

1. *Of the underſtanding.*

1. THIS word, in its wideſt ſenſe, comprehends all the various modes of thought: viz. the powers of imagining, remembering, comparing, compounding, abſtracting.—Theſe are indifferent in their application; being occaſions, as it may happen, either of pleaſure or pain. Yet ſince the manner of applying them depends on our own choice; and it is moſt likely we ſhould chooſe to employ them for our own benefit: they are ſo far preſumptions of benevolence in the Author of Nature. — Thus, for inſtance,

Imagi-

Imagination is of evident advantage to us. For, beſides that it has ſome pleaſures peculiar to itſelf, it is the neceſſary *means* both of obtaining pleaſure, and avoiding pain; without it, no ſchemes could ever be formed for the direction of our conduct.

THE *memory* of paſt events helps us to judge of future; and to diſcern the conſequences of different ways of acting, propoſed to our deliberation.

THE powers of *comparing*, *compounding* and *abſtracting*, are many ways uſeful to us; particularly as to them we owe the ineſtimable advantages of *ſpeech* and *reaſon* *; by which we are enabled both to form deſigns and to execute them.

ADD to all theſe powers the *aſſociation* of ideas; on which ſeveral of the preceding operations depend; and which therefore cannot but be beneficial in its *general* influence, tho' in ſome particular inſtances it may chance to miſlead us.

IN

* Jam verò *animum* ipſum *mentemque* hominis—ex quo *ſcientia* intelligitur, quam vim habeat, qualis ſit: quâ ne in Deo quidem eſt res ulla præſtantior. Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. ii. c. 59. And again, Jam verò domina rerum—*eloquendi* vis, quam eſt præclara, quamque divina? Ib.

The whole of this chapter, and the two next are much to the purpoſe. Pope and Bolingbroke have paid little attention to a diſcourſe as beautiful as it is juſt.

In general, we may conclude each of theſe faculties to be advantageous, becauſe the want of any of them would be eſteemed a great loſs, and the perfection of all extremely deſirable.

II. Understanding, in the more confined ſenſe of the word, is the name of that faculty by which we are enabled to form true conceptions of the parts and properties, eſpecially the *relative* properties, of objects preſented to our view: either on the one hand by *analogical* reaſoning, grounded on the teſtimony of ſenſe, or on the other hand by *demonſtrative* proof grounded on intuition.

This faculty, at leaſt ſome degree of it, is neceſſary for the preſervation of life. But this could not be the *whole* intention of it. It was evidently deſigned to promote the *happineſs* of life. For,

1ſt. It is the ſource of a *peculiar* pleaſure, attending the purſuit and diſcovery of truth.

2dly. It is the neceſſary inſtrument of *action*. Without it we ſhould act in vain, or in ways deſtructive to our happineſs. By it we diſcern the methods of avoiding evil and obtaining good.

3dly. This faculty contributes greatly to our happineſs

happineſs by making one man agreeable and uſeful to another.

But the true value of it may beſt be eſtimated by the misfortune of *loſing* it. Few perſons, on this head, would be of the ſame mind with Him in the poet, who thought it an injury to be reſtored to his right ſenſes.

2. *Of the Will.*

This faculty alſo was *intended* for our good; and is therefore an inſtance of benevolence in the Author of our beings. For,

1ſt. That conſtitution of nature, which makes us *active* beings, enables us to follow the dictates of the underſtanding; and by ſo doing, both to avoid evil, and to obtain good.

2dly. We feel a peculiar ſatisfaction from ſucceſs in either kind, when we are conſcious of owing it to our own conduct. Whatever advantages we acquire by ſkill, or induſtry, or virtue, give us double pleaſure on reflection.

3dly. Action itſelf conſtitutes a main part of our happineſs. There is a ſingular pleaſure in chooſing for *ourſelves*, and in proſecuting the objects of our choice.

4thly. *Virtuous* actions give ſtill a ſuperior happineſs; both from our conſciouſneſs of deſert,

ſert, and the approbation we obtain, or think we obtain, from other intelligent beings.

Obj. It may be alleged perhaps, that the *imperfection* of human underſtanding, and the *uncertainty*, which attends the determinations of the will, leave every man's happineſs in a *precarious* ſtate. The *fact* cannot be diſputed. —The *account* of it will fall more conveniently under another head. It may be better however to run the hazard of ſome repetition, than to paſs it over intirely in this place.

The objection, when fully ſtated, will ſtand thus.

That conſtitution of nature, which makes us intelligent and free beings, is the occaſion of evil as well as good; perhaps of *more* evil than good. For men hurt, by the abuſe of their faculties, both themſelves and others: they have *peculiar* pain too from the ſufferings they bring on themſelves; and they are expoſed to remorſe and infamy from acting againſt the intereſts of ſociety.—It may ſuffice, at preſent, to anſwer to this objection, that,

1ſt. *More* of men's actions are beneficial, than hurtful.

2dly. The benefit was *intended* by the Author of Nature, the harm was *not* intended. For the harm, as will appear afterwards, always ariſes

ariſes from the abuſe of ſome beneficial principle. The *general* frame and conſtitution of our nature, with the ſituation and circumſtances in which we are placed, *incline* us to a *right* uſe of our faculties.

3dly. The power of being happy or miſerable, *as we will*, is more likely to be the gift of a good than an evil being. For all men *deſire* happineſs. Therefore all are likely to *purſue* it.

If any force remain in this objection, it belongs to another head: namely, the *temptations* by which men are led to act wrong. The *power* of acting either conſtitutes or cauſes our higheſt enjoyments: and is not, of itſelf, any cauſe at all of miſery. — Leaving then this part of the objection to its proper place, we need only obſerve that the *poſſible* abuſe of our faculties is by no means to be put in competition with the good they actually produce. No man, I ſuppoſe, would willingly be deprived of them, to avoid the danger of ſuch abuſes.

3. *Of the Paſſions.*

The various modes of pleaſure and pain which ariſe from imagination or reflection, are ſometimes diſtinguiſhed into *internal ſenſes*, *affections*, and *paſſions*. There is no great uſe in the diſtinction; and great difficulty in applying it,

it, ſo as to refer every ſentiment to its proper claſs. I ſhall therefore comprehend them all under the general name of *paſſions* *.

Now the powers we poſſeſs of receiving pleaſure or pain *indifferently*, by means of reflexion, may be conſidered as preſumptions either of benevolence or malevolence, according as the *conſequences* reſulting from ſuch ſenſations are beneficial or hurtful. But it ſhould not be forgotten, that we receive ſome pleaſures on reflexion, which have *no pains* to balance them.---Such are the pleaſures received *directly* from all objects, either of imagination or underſtanding, which appear *great*, *beautiful*, or *new*.---Such alſo are the pleaſures received *indirectly* from the various modes of *imitation*, conſtituting what are called the *liberal arts*. The oppoſite ſenſations, if there be any, are too inſignificant to deſerve notice.

The moſt obvious diviſion of the *paſſions* is into thoſe which reſpect *ourſelves* and thoſe which reſpect *other men*: and theſe laſt again may be diſtinguiſhed into *ſocial* and *malevolent* paſſions. To theſe ſeveral claſſes muſt be ſubjoined the *moral ſenſe*, the appointed guide of them all.

* See a ſlight theory of the paſſions at the end of this treatiſe.

1. *Of the ſelfiſh Paſſions.*

1. *Self-eſteem*, and its *oppoſite*, are probable means of *pleaſure*. For every man has it in his power to enjoy the one, at leaſt ſome degree of it, and to avoid the other.

They are alſo evidently *uſeful*: by exciting us, on the one hand, to enlarge our capacities of doing good, and to apply them properly; on the other, to forbear all ſuch conduct as might diſable us from being uſeful to ourſelves and others. Theſe ſentiments, when properly regulated, differ but little from what is called a virtuous *pride*, and a virtuous *ſhame*.

Suppose a *contrary* conſtitution. Suppoſe the ordinary frame of the human mind to be, what we ſometimes obſerve in very uncommon perverſions of it. Suppoſe that every man valued himſelf in proportion to the inſignificance or the hurtfulneſs of his character, and could not reflect without bluſhing on his inclination or ability to do good—It is eaſy to ſee what muſt be the conſequence.

2. Selfish *deſires*, and *averſions* may in general be conſidered as uſeful and neceſſary. They excite us to uſeful actions, and reſtrain us from hurtful ones.

In

In regard to the *objects* of theſe paſſions, it muſt be remembered, that all our deſires aim either at pleaſure and the means of producing it *, or the means of removing and preventing pain. Hence,

1ſt. The deſire of *property*.—This inclination gives riſe to almoſt all the *buſineſs* tranſacted in private life: i. e. cauſes all the happineſs, ariſing from the induſtry of private men.

2dly. The deſires of *dominion*, and *liberty*.—The former encourages men to expoſe themſelves to fatigue and danger for the ſervice of others: the latter is a check on thoſe who have *acquired* dominion, and diſcourages them from abuſing it.

3dly. The deſire of *honour*. This paſſion is many ways uſeful to mankind.

1. It excites us to *deſerve* honour, by acquiring the ability, and improving the diſpoſition, which nature has given us, to pleaſe and to benefit other men.

2. It renders men *dear* to each other, if they make a proper uſe of it; and ſo increaſes their

* The *cuſtomary* means. Theſe, from aſſociation, become objects of deſire, even when the pleaſing effect is no longer expected. Thus men deſire *fame*, and, in ſome ſort they deſire *property*, even after death.

their propenſity to acts of kindneſs and benevolence.—On the other hand,

3. It reſtrains them from ſuch conduct, as would render them odious or contemptible: ſuch as might either tend to produce evil, or leſſen their capacity of doing good.

Our averſions are aimed againſt pain and its cauſes, or againſt thoſe cauſes which are deſtructive of pleaſure. Hence,

Death is of courſe an object of averſion; a conſtitution plainly tending to our preſervation, and probably to our pleaſure.

It is needleſs to purſue the other objects of theſe paſſions; which are juſt as many as the different kinds of ſenſation, and the different cauſes of each.

Something however muſt be ſaid of their general *laws*: the principal of which are theſe three.

1ſt. They depend jointly on our opinion of the *probability* of an event, and of its *efficacy* in producing pleaſure or pain. Deſpair kills deſire.—This occaſions us to apply our endeavours, where they may be uſeful; and to forbear fruitleſs purſuits. At the ſame time it ſets us free from uſeleſs uneaſineſs.

2dly.

2dly. THEY are more forcibly excited by *particular* pleaſures and pains, than by general views.---Theſe laſt are of uncertain effect, leaving too much to the determination of reaſon; and could not ſo ſafely have been truſted by nature in ſome of her moſt important operations.---The obſervation is peculiarly applicable to ſuch deſires as are founded on bodily appetites. The paſſions grafted on theſe appetites, and aiming at particular objects, are much more violent, and ought to be ſo, than the calm deſire of our general intereſt and happineſs.

3dly. THEY are more forcibly excited by *near* than diſtant objects.---The former are more likely to be within the reach of our endeavours. The next claſs of paſſions are,

3. SELFISH *joy* and *ſorrow*.---Theſe are indifferent at leaſt; as only ſerving to enlarge the ſphere of our pleaſures and pains. Nor do theſe *pains* afford any ſort of preſumption againſt the divine benevolence. For they are conſequences of the powers of *anticipation* and *memory*, both beneficial: together with the power of feeling uneaſineſs from paſt or future events; which is alſo beneficial, ſince without it neither anticipation nor memory could influence the will. It is to be conſidered therefore as an *accidental* ill conſequence of a good general conſtitution.---Indeed theſe powers cannot be taken away without an intire ceſſation of human action.

SOR-

Sorrow too, in many kinds, has its *immediate* uſe; more perhaps than ſufficient to be weighed againſt it. For, while kept under proper regulations, it is a powerful excitement to *action*; prompting us to a vigorous exertion of our faculties, that we may procure either remedies or compenſation.

2. *Of the ſocial and malevolent Paſſions.*

1. *Reſpect* and *love* are uſeful by rewarding and encouraging men's ability and inclination to do good.

Respect affords an encouragement to the acquiſition of uſeful talents: reſtrains men from giving offence, and excites them to pleaſe thoſe, who are able to ſerve or to hurt them.

Love, in *general*, is a pleaſing ſentiment; and is alſo a cauſe of benevolence.---The particular *kinds* of love are evidently beneficial.

1ſt. *Conjugal* love promotes the ends of marriage: reſtrains men's deſires to a ſingle object, and rewards their fidelity. By theſe means it promotes ſuch an intercourſe between the ſexes, as is moſt beneficial to ſociety.

2dly. *Parental* love rewards the care and fatigue of the parent, in providing for his offſpring, as well as in preſerving and educating them.

them. By theſe means help is obtained for thoſe, who moſt want it.---It is obvious too, that the affections of children to parents are not *reciprocal*. This would have been an unneceſſary precaution: for the parent uſually wants not the aſſiſtance of the child.

3dly. LOVE, ariſing from any kind of perſonal *merit*, is an encouragement to merit: and love to *benefactors* rewards and encourages beneficence.

4thly. LOVE of *acquaintance*, beſides that we may ſuppoſe it to be included under the laſt head, makes men moſt *inclined* to do good, where they are moſt able to do it: and encourages, becauſe it rewards, a frequent intercourſe among them.

2. *Contempt* and *hatred* diſcourage and puniſh men's inability to do good, or their inclination to do harm.

CONTEMPT gives uneaſineſs to the objects of it: and this uneaſineſs excites them very powerfully to remove the cauſe of it; by correcting, ſo far as they can, the qualities which produce it, and acquiring ſome degree of credit and conſideration in the world.

HATRED, though a painful, and ſometimes a hurtful, ſenſation, yet in the intention of nature is beneficial.---For,

1ſt.

1ſt. A GENERAL hatred of *bad men* is a conſtant diſcouragement to hurtful actions.

2dly. HATRED ariſing from *perſonal* injury is a defence to each individual. For both the hatred itſelf and its conſequences ſtrike a terror into thoſe, who *wiſh* to injure.

3dly. *No* ſuch paſſion *uſually* ariſes towards *benefactors* or *ſtrangers*, where it would be evidently hurtful: it ariſes only on the appearance of *harm* done or intended, or good neglected to be done; in which caſes it muſt be generally beneficial.

THERE is only one exception to this rule, viz.

HATRED, ariſing from competition, or compariſon. But this ſeems only an accidental conſequence of a good general conſtitution. For hatred *uſually* ariſes, and ought to ariſe, towards thoſe who give us *pain*: though, in this particular inſtance, the good effect of it may appear more doubtful than in others.--It is not however altogether without advantage: as ſerving to increaſe *emulation*; i. e. a laudable deſire of raiſing ourſelves to a level with others, if not of ſurpaſſing them in uſeful talents.

3. *Benevolent* deſires and averſions, with the hopes and fears, joys and ſorrows, that attend them, are a very material part of this ſubject.

The

The *general* utility of theſe ſentiments admits of no diſpute; they give every man an *intereſt* in the happineſs of others, and by conſequence excite him to do good, and to forbear evil.

THE particular *laws* of this paſſion are alſo beneficial.—Thus,

1ſt. *Compaſſion* is made ſtronger than the oppoſite ſentiment. For the *miſerable*, not the happy, need our aſſiſtance.

2dly. COMPASSION itſelf is not *invariable*. The *feelings* of it decreaſe, as the *habits* produced by it increaſe: i. e. the uneaſy ſenſation is made to abate, in proportion as it becomes leſs neceſſary.

3dly. THE *oppoſite* ſentiment is alſo variable; but in a contrary direction. The pleaſure we feel from the happineſs of others *increaſes* with our habits of beneficence.

4thly. THE pain of compaſſion is attended with agreeable reflexions. We are told by an excellent judge, that the very *tears* of virtue are pleaſing: and this pleaſure is, in moſt caſes, ſufficient to balance the pain; and prevent us from checking a ſentiment ſo uſeful to ſociety.

5thly. BENEVOLENCE is produced and increaſed by reſpect and love: it is leſſened or deſtroyed

deſtroyed by contempt and hatred. This conſtitution ſerves to mark out *particular objects* of our affection: which would otherwiſe be weak, becauſe it would be general. And that theſe objects are *properly* marked, no one can doubt, who conſiders the *cauſes*, on which the paſſions abovementioned are found to depend. By them we are prompted to do good to thoſe who beſt deſerve or moſt want it; and to *attempt* good, where our endeavours are moſt likely to ſucceed.

4. *Malevolent* deſires and averſions, tho' always painful, and ſometimes hurtful, yet, in the intention of nature, are beneficial.—The ſame cauſes which produce *hatred*, produce *ill-will*, which is the conſequence of hatred: and both theſe paſſions, under proper regulations, promote the general good.

When we wiſh ill to others from a principle of *indignation* againſt vice, or even *reſentment* of perſonal injuries; the ſentiment leads us to promote the intereſts of ſociety by oppoſing or puniſhing bad men.

When our ill-will proceeds from competition; it ſtimulates us the more to acquire thoſe advantages to ourſelves, for which we *envy* others: or to avoid the diſadvantages, which in them we behold with pleaſure. And this was pretty plainly the intention of nature. For, *independently* of ſuch competition, the pleaſure

sure of others gives us *no* pain, & v. v.; unless in persons whom we are used to consider as private or public enemies: nor do we feel in *any* case the sentiments of envy and malice, where those sentiments would be altogether *useless*; as, for instance, when we reflect on the talents or success of others, in circumstances totally *unlike* our own.

Obj. But whatever advantage may arise from our malevolent passions, they are supposed to give unnecessary pain, and to occasion unnecessary mischief: for that the selfish and social passions, under the direction of reason, are sufficient for producing the same ends. Our regard to others, as well as ourselves, will excite us to repel or punish hurtful actions; and our reason will enable us to discern the consequences of such actions, and to guard against them.

In answer to this objection, it is to be observed,

1st. That men *will not* be engaged by these motives, to repel or punish ill actions, when the mischief to be expected from them is either *distant* or *general*.

2dly. That these motives, if they wait for the direction of reason, will operate too *slowly*, and so the opportunities of exertion will often be lost.

3dly.

3dly. THAT the reſiſtance and puniſhment may often be prevented by the *oppoſition* between ſocial principles and ſelfiſh.

4thly. THAT men are likely to be reſtrained from proſecuting or puniſhing offenders by *indolence* and *compaſſion*.

5thly. THAT the ſuppoſed utility of malevolent paſſions is fully confirmed by experience. In the preſent ſtate of things, *neglect* in reſiſting or puniſhing is juſt as frequent, as *exceſs*. Remove the influence of indignation and reſentment, and it will become much *more* frequent, evidently to the harm of ſociety.

I AM ſenſible, after all, that a writer muſt lie under great diſadvantage, who ſpeaks one word in favour of ſuch odious paſſions, as *hatred* and *malevolence*. But are not men miſled in this inſtance, as in others, by the imperfection of *language?* A good man, it is ſuppoſed, *never hates*, never bears *ill-will* to his neighbour. But the fallacy lies here, that when theſe ſentiments are confined within reaſonable bounds, the obnoxious *names* are not given them. Sure it is, that no human breaſt is free from them; and were they totally baniſhed the world, the miſchiefs of ſuch a change would probably be more, and greater, than is uſually apprehended.

3. Of

3. *Of the Moral Senſe.*

THIS *ſentiment* (it is ſeldom, I confeſs, called a *paſſion*) is undoubtedly beneficial. When applied to ourſelves, it rewards our virtues, or puniſhes our vices. When applied to others, it directs our love and hatred, our benevolence and malevolence, to proper objects.

BUT it is chiefly important, as applied to ourſelves: by exciting us to gratify our benevolent inclinations, and rewarding our compliance; and by diſcouraging us from giving way to other inclinations, when they interfere with theſe: alſo by deciding the conteſt between inconſiſtent paſſions, and enabling us to preſerve our minds in tranquillity: alſo by making our conduct *uniform*; that the occaſional impulſes of paſſion may not engage us in contrary purſuits, and unavoidable diſappointments: laſtly, by increaſing our attention to diſtant and general objects, and repreſſing the violence of particular deſires and averſions, which might lead us to neglect our true happineſs.

SOME perſons, miſled, I ſuppoſe, by the abuſe of words, allow no ſuch ſentiment to *exiſt* in the human mind. But no one, we may preſume, who admits the *reality*, will diſpute the *uſe* of it.

NOT

NOT only the ſentiment itſelf, but the *degree* of it, is what it ought to be. We may imagine perhaps that a *higher* degree would be ſtill better; a more effectual guard to our own virtue, and a more powerful reſtraint on the conduct of other men. But, ſuppoſing only our underſtanding and paſſions to continue the ſame in *all other* reſpects, the change propoſed would be a change for the worſe. For it would render our eſteem of others very difficult, and our ſelf-eſteem impoſſible. Should you think to avoid this inconvenience by increaſing only the ſenſe of *moral good*, without increaſing the ſenſe of *moral evil* (a thing perhaps impracticable), men would become leſs cautious of their conduct, and leſs attentive to their moral improvement. But this is a ſubject to be reſumed in another place. *

HAVING thus gone through the conſideration of the *ſeveral* paſſions, it may be proper to attend to the objections which are made to *all*

* Some writers have imagined, that no concluſions can be drawn from the ſtate of the paſſions for, or againſt, Divine Benevolence; becauſe they are not *innate*, but *acquired*. This is frivolous. If we are ſo framed, and placed in ſuch circumſtances, that all theſe various paſſions *muſt* be acquired; it is juſt the ſame thing as if they had been planted in us originally. It is true, indeed, they may fall into an *unnatural* ſtate; a ſtate contrary to their *uſual* courſe, and to the intention of our Maker. But that is quite another matter; and will immediately come under a diſtinct conſideration.

all of them. Of theſe the moſt material are the two that follow.

Obj. FIRST, that all our paſſions, even while they remain in their *natural* ſtate, often give occaſion to wrong *conduct*. For that they excite indifferently in *all* circumſtances, even in thoſe where they are not to be gratified without damage to ourſelves or others.

BUT to this objection there needs no other anſwer, than that God governs the world by general laws; a point to be conſidered at large hereafter.

Obj. 2. IT is alleged that all our paſſions are liable to *abuſe*; and that ſuch abuſe gives occaſion to great miſchief, both private and ſocial. The fact indeed is certain; but the objection may be anſwered in various ways.

1ſt. THE *power* of abuſing our paſſions is a part only of that general diſpenſation, which makes human happineſs depend on human conduct.

2dly. THE *actual* abuſe proceeds in a great degree from the *imperfection* of our *underſtanding*; a circumſtance, as will afterwards appear, of no weight in the preſent queſtion.

3dly.

3dly. These abuſes appear to be *accidental* only, not intended by the Author of Nature *. Nay, they are plainly *contrary* to his intention: and one part of the harm ariſing from themſelves as a *penalty*; obliging men, in ſome degree, to *reſtrain* ſuch abuſes in themſelves and others. Now, it is from the *cuſtomary* and natural ſtate of the paſſions, not from occaſional variations, that we are to collect the deſign with which they are given us.

4thly. Even theſe accidental abuſes are often *remedied*. For the abuſe of one paſſion frequently corrects the abuſe of another: and the exceſs of a paſſion in one perſon frequently balances the defect of it in another.

5thly. The *general* ſtate of the paſſions is what it ought to be. The *direction* of each is uſually right: and the *degree* of each is comparatively right. No one can be conſiderably weakened, through the whole human ſpecies, without great harm, ſuppoſing all the reſt to remain as they are. Nor is the force of the paſſions too great, when taken *all together*. Were the amount of them leſs, through the whole race of mankind, and we were to approach ſo much the nearer to the apathy of the Stoics: this ſuppoſed reformation of our nature

* Non idcircò (Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 3. c. 28.) non optimè nobis à Diis eſſe *proviſum*, quod multi eorum beneficio *perversè uterentur*.

ture would neither make us more useful nor more happy; but, on the contrary, would deprive us of the chief joys of life, and the most powerful springs of human action *.

We have now gone through our enquiry into the various powers of the human mind; and have examined separately, what presumptions they afford of good or ill intention in the Author of Nature: and the result has been, that the understanding, the will, and the passions, are each of them adapted to good *ends*, tho' *accidentally* indeed the occasion of evil. Yet this, it seems, is not sufficient. There are some writers, who object to the frame of our nature, not on account of its *unfitness*, but its *imperfection*. I will first state the objection, and then examine the force of it.

General objection.

It is alleged, that our *bodies* are exceedingly *frail*; so that our happiness is in continual danger of interruption from external accidents; some from our own misconduct; some from the misconduct of others; some without any fault, either in us or them. Now why, it is said, are we exposed to so much hazard? Why placed within the reach of innumerable causes

* Ἀφαιρήσεται γὰρ ἡμῖν ἅπτη τὴν ἐκ τοῦ φιλεῖσθαι καὶ φιλεῖν εὔνοιαν, ἣν παντὸς μᾶλλον διασώζειν ἀναγκαῖον. Plut. Cons. ad Ap.

of miſchief, which we are too blind to avoid, and too weak to withſtand? Even with the utmoſt care and vigilance, it is many times impoſſible for us to eſcape them, or to ſupport ourſelves under them. Yet God might, if he had pleaſed, have ſecured us from them all. He has *not* pleaſed: therefore he is not benevolent.

THE mind too, we are told, as well as the body, is manifeſtly defective. Its powers are contracted and limited, to a degree which defeats, in a great meaſure, the main ends for which they are ſaid to have been given us.—Our *reaſon*, we know, is often unable to direct us to what is good: often expoſes us to miſtakes, which lead to evil *.——The *moral faculty* itſelf is liable to be *miſled* by ſuch miſtakes. Even when it is rightly directed, it is *inſufficient*; being too weak to prevail againſt the appetites and paſſions. Now all the conſequences of this imperfect conſtitution were diſtinctly foreſeen by the *Author* of it; and he might, if he had pleaſed, have given us ſo high a degree of underſtanding as would have rendered us infallible; and ſo quick a moral ſenſe as

* Sentit domus uniuſcujuſque ſentit forum—ut, quemadmodum ratione recte fiet, ſic ratione peccetur. See this, and much more, alleged by Cotta in Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 3. c. 27.

Again (c. 31.) In hominum vitiis ais eſſe culpam. Eam dediſſes hominibus ratione, quæ vitia culpamque excluderet.

as would have rendered us impeccable. Yet, tho' he *ſaw* the miſchiefs which would ariſe from human imperfection, and might have prevented them, he did not *chuſe* to prevent them. The ill therefore which followed was *intended* by him: and it may reaſonably be concluded, that he framed and conſtituted us as we are, with a *deſign* of making us vicious and miſerable.

I BELIEVE it will not be denied, that I have given this objection its full force. Yet we ſhall ſoon ſee, that it has no force at all, but what ariſes from preſumption and folly.

FOR in the firſt place, the objectors will never be able to prove, what they aſſert with the utmoſt confidence, that God *might* have made us more perfect than we are. Moſt ſure it is, that he can do all things poſſible. But are *we*, in any degree, competent *judges* of the bounds of poſſibility? We can hardly ſtir one ſtep farther than we have *experience* for our guide. When this guide fails us, we have no bottom to ſtand upon; unleſs we will truſt to a principle very apt to miſlead us, that whatever man can imagine, God can effect. But,

2dly. IF we allow them the poſſibility of greater perfection, they will ſtill be unable to prove the *expedience* of it. For who can take upon him to ſay, that the production of a *leſs perfect* being may not be beſt for the *univerſe*?

We ſee, in this ſyſtem, the advantage, and even neceſſity, of *ſubordination*. May it not be equally neceſſary to the good of the whole? We need not indeed to ſtop here. For,

3dly. It *may* be beſt for man in particular, that his *firſt* ſtate ſhould be an imperfect one. This appears probable even from analogy. Men would be unfit for the part allotted to them in their *riper* years, if they were not trained up in the diſcipline of *childhood*. May not, in like manner, the *whole* of our preſent life be a ſtate of diſcipline? a neceſſary preparation for a higher ſtate? If ſo, our complaints will amount to nothing more, than that we are children firſt, before we are men.—Nay, thoſe very imperfections, of which we complain, are, in one view, of *evident* importance to us: I mean, as they afford room for the acquiſition of virtuous habits; habits of *reſolution* and *attention*. Attention could have no place at all, if our judgment were infallible; for perfect ſecurity excludes all care: and *reſolution* would be uſeleſs, if we had no difficulties to ſurmount. And may not the virtues, which are thus acquired, be the neceſſary foundation of our ſupreme happineſs? May not our paſſing with prudence and fortitude thro' the uncertainties and dangers of this preſent ſtate, be the neceſſary means of attaining that *higher* degree of perfection, to which we ignorantly and preſumptuouſly put in our claim, before we are quali-

qualified to receive it? It is plainly *not* the method of nature, in other parts of the creation, to obtain her ends *inſtantaneouſly*. Perhaps therefore perfection *cannot* be thus attained; but men muſt be gradually formed to that capacity and temper, which are to make them happy for ever.

Even if all theſe conjectures ſhould fail (which are ſurely more probable than any thing that can be ſet againſt them), ſtill the argument alleged will be found inconcluſive. For,

4thly. The evils to which we are expoſed in this imperfect ſtate appear to be *accidental*, not natural, effects of our frame and condition. Every part of the body, and every faculty of the mind, was evidently *deſigned* for the good it produces: but there is no appearance that any of them was deſigned to produce evil; both becauſe the production of evil affords a leſs *certain* proof of intention, and becauſe alſo it is leſs *frequently* produced by any aſſignable principle in human nature *.—Let us ſuppoſe

* Thus, for inſtance, the *ſtomach* was deſigned for digeſtion, not indigeſtion; the *eyes* for ſeeing, not for ſmarting; the *feet* for walking, not for the pains of the gout.

So again the paſſion of *ſhame* was deſigned to prevent diſgraceful actions, not ſurely to influence an unhappy mother to the murder of her own child.

poſe however, for a moment, that the ills of life were actually *included* in the divine intention; yet this hinders not, but that our nature may have been conſtituted by a wiſe and good being. For,

5thly. SHOULD we admit, that the bodies of men *might* have poſſeſſed a greater degree of ſtrength and firmneſs, without loſs or harm in any other reſpect; yet our preſent frailty will prove only a *limitation* of benevolence, not a total *want* of it, in the Author of Nature. Should we admit farther, that our intellectual and moral powers *might* have been advanced to a higher degree of perfection, without defeating any good purpoſe whatever; yet the defects of which we complain, will only ſhew a *deficiency*, as we might fancy, in the divine goodneſs: they will afford no preſumption of *malevolent* intention. It avails nothing to ſay, that this imperfect conſtitution gives occaſion to *evil*. For it was *kindneſs*, not malice, to intend a *mixed* ſyſtem with a ſuperior tendency to good: juſt as much as to produce a *ſmaller* degree of good, unmixed with evil; which, I preſume, no one would have denied to be a clear proof of benevolence. If you require all the ill to be removed, and yet *all* the good to continue; you require in effect *more* good, i. e. a higher degree of benevolence. But the arguments, by which we prove the Divine Benevolence to a certain degree,

are

are not overturned by objecting, that a *greater* degree is conceivable. I am now arguing on the very unreaſonable ſuppoſition, that human conception is the meaſure of divine power. Yet the objector, when poſſeſſed of every advantage which this ſtrange ſuppoſition can give, has no way of ſupporting himſelf, but by an argument as void of ſenſe as it is of gratitude; "God has given us *nothing*, becauſe he has *more* to give:" an argument, which proves equally againſt *every* imaginable condition of being; and therefore proves, in reality againſt *none*.

"NOT ſo, it will be ſaid, for God may, if he pleaſes, give *all:* may totally *exhauſt* his own power by forming the *beſt ſyſtem poſſible*. Had he done this, there would have been nothing left either to aſk or to wiſh."---But neither will this ſuppoſition have any better ſucceſs in eluding the force of our preſent argument.

FOR why may we not ſay, with the philoſophers of a neighbouring nation *, the beſt ſyſtem

* See the *Theodicée* of M. *Leibnitz:* with whom alſo agrees Balbus in Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 11. c. 34.

Cujus quidem adminiſtratio nihil habet in ſe quod reprehendi poſſit: ex iis enim naturis quæ erant, quod effici *optimum* potuit, effectum eſt.

ſyſtem poſſible has *actually* taken place? Let him, that *can*, confute the aſſertion. While it remains *unconfuted*, it will be found an invincible obſtacle to all arguments againſt the goodneſs of God.

We might here conclude this branch of our inquiry; but the ſubject of human nature is ſo very important, that it may not be improper to collect ſome of the preceding obſervations into a ſingle point of view. For this purpoſe the following ſhort abſtract is laid before the reader. It is chiefly taken from a book leſs known, and leſs valued, than it deſerves, Mr. Hutcheſon's Treatiſe on the Paſſions.

Remarks on the utility of our ſenſes and paſſions.

1. The appetites of hunger, thirſt, ſleepineſs, prevent us from neglecting the means of preſervation; inform us of the times, when theſe means are to be uſed; and overcome our averſion to labour in the attainment of them.

2. The appetites of the ſexes prevent us from neglecting the means of continuing the ſpecies; and overcome the apprehenſion of expence and trouble in the care and education of children.

3. The ſenſe of external pain is, in a good meaſure, neceſſary to reſtrain us from hurting our-

ourſelves: the pains of ſickneſs, to put us on ſeeking for proper remedies. Nor is the degree of theſe pains too acute. For we ſee, in fact, they are not always *ſufficiently* acute, to anſwer their ends completely.

4. The *various tribes* of ſelfiſh affections and paſſions are all the reſult of theſe few neceſſary principles: and therefore this part of the conſtitution of our nature affords us no arguments againſt the benevolence of its Author.

5. Were the *ſelfiſh* appetites and paſſions left alone, we ſhould be greatly indiſpoſed to acts of beneficence, and frequently engaged in acts of a contrary tendency. They are properly balanced therefore by a *ſympathy* with others: whence it comes to paſs, in a variety of caſes, that *their* intereſts become *ours*; and excite ſimilar paſſions in our minds. This ſympathy is ſtrongeſt where it is moſt needful: i. e. in the *misfortunes* of others. The pain we feel from *compaſſion* is of evident advantage to mankind.

6. The oppoſite paſſion of *reſentment* is neceſſary to reſtrain injuſtice, (the effect of ſelfiſh paſſions frequently, and ſometimes of *ſocial*) by making it dangerous to the aggreſſor.

7. *Shame* and *remorſe* either reſtrain us from ill conduct, or lead us to repent and reform.

They

They cannot be thought too ſtrong. For they are often found ineffectual.

8. ANY increaſe of the *ſelfiſh* paſſions, without a higher degree of underſtanding, would make men unfit for ſociety: and, on the other hand, an increaſe of the *ſocial* paſſions would qualify us to be heroes of romance, rather than reaſonable beings.

IV. *Of the mutual dependence between man and other animals.*

MEN unqueſtionably receive benefit, in various ways, from the brute creation: and they, in return, from the ſkill and induſtry of men *. Now,

1. THIS is an argument of God's benevolence to *men*: which appears by his making ſo plentiful a proviſion for their convenience and happineſs.

2. IT is alſo a proof of his benevolence to *inferior* creatures. For inanimate and vegetable

* Accedit etiam ad nonnullorum animantium——conſervationem et ſalutem hominum etiam ſolertia et diligentia. Nam multæ——pecudes ſunt, quæ ſine procuratione hominum ſalvæ eſſe non poſſunt. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. II. c. 52.

In C. 63. of the ſame book, Balbus proves, on the other hand, Ipſas beſtias hominum gratiâ generatas eſſe. He inſtances in ſheep, dogs, oxen ſwine, &c.

ble ſubſtances might have anſwered *our* uſes juſt as well. The addition therefore of life and ſenſe ſhews, it was God's intention to give room for *more* happineſs in his creation; and, the care we take of brute animals being the *condition* of our deriving advantage from them, it appears to have been farther intended that ſuch care ſhould be taken.

Obj. SOME brutes are uſeleſs; others deſtructive to man; and they, on the other hand, ſuffer and die for *his* convenience. To this may be anſwered,

1ſt. THAT the *uſeleſſneſs* of any part of the animal creation, only ſhews the dependence not to be *univerſal*. Still theſe very animals, however uſeleſs to *us*, afford arguments of divine benevolence: for they are all of them made capable, in ſome degree, of enjoying pleaſure.

2dly. THE brutes, which are *deſtructive* to men, afford no argument of malevolence.—For it was not the intention of nature that men ſhould be *immortal*; and the *manner* of their dying is a circumſtance of little moment.

3dly. To the remaining part of the objection we ſay; Thoſe brutes, which are uſeful to man, derive in general *more* good than ill from

from their connexion with him. If the lives of ſome of them are ſhortened by it, they have, while they live, care taken of them, and a better proviſion is made for them in all reſpects, than they were capable of making for themſelves. Add to this, that a much greater *number* of theſe animals is ſupported by human induſtry, than could poſſibly have ſubſiſted, if the earth had remained without cultivation.

It is true, indeed, that men ſometimes *abuſe* the power they have over animals. But what power will they not abuſe?

V. *Of the mutual dependence of mankind.*

This conſtitution affords a ſtrong preſumption of divine benevolence.

1. Because it gives room for the exerciſe of human *virtue*.

2. Because it gives riſe to the pleaſures of *friendſhip*, and to thoſe which we derive from the *eſteem* and *benevolence* of other men.

3. Because it unites men in *ſociety*; and ſo leads them on to every enjoyment they receive from their mutual intercourſe.

STILL indeed we lie open to the objection so often repeated, and so applicable to almost every circumstance of our condition in this world, viz.

Obj. MEN are continually *abusing* their power over others; and thus numbers suffer by one man's fault.

THE objection however may be answered in many different ways.

1st. THE *faults* of men were not *intended* by their Creator. All instances of misconduct in them are contrary to *his* will; and *almost* all are contrary to their own interest, which naturally all men pursue.

2dly. ALL our faults arise either from the constitution of the human *mind*, or the *external* circumstances of our situation; both which have been already vindicated.

3dly. THE good effects of social intercourse far overbalance the ill; and therefore these can only weaken, not destroy, the force of the argument.

HITHERTO we have sought for arguments in the different *parts* of the constitution of nature, and the *particular laws* to which each of them is subject. The next object of enquiry will be those

thoſe *more general* laws, which extend thro' God's *whole* adminiſtration: and theſe alſo will be found to ſuggeſt probable arguments of a benevolent intention in the Author of Nature; certainly to afford *no* preſumption of a *contrary* intention.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART

PART II.

THIS part of our inquiry, agreeably to the plan proposed, will comprehend an answer to the following questions.

1. WHETHER the more general laws of divine administration afford any presumption of good, or ill, intention in the Deity.

2. WHETHER any additional evidence arises, on either part, from the uniformity and constancy with which God's laws are administered.

3. WHETHER the continual opposition made to divine administration by human agents, afford us any cause to doubt of the benevolence of our Maker.

I. *Of the more general laws of divine administration.*

THE principal of these laws are three; all of

of which, at firſt ſight, may create ſome ſuſpicion at leaſt of a want of benevolence in the Author of Nature.

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1. THAT the happineſs of men is made to depend on their *actions*.

2. THAT they are excited to perform theſe actions by *puniſhments*, as well as rewards.

3. THAT, in *both* ways, they are often excited to *hurtful*, as well as beneficial, actions.

1. THAT the happineſs of men is made to depend on their actions.

THIS law, whatever other concluſions may be drawn from it, will certainly afford no proof of *malevolence*. It is true, indeed, that men's happineſs or miſery is, to a great degree, put in their own power. But power, of itſelf, has no more tendency to ill than good; and therefore no inference, of either kind, can with certainty be gathered from this part of the conſtitution of nature. The preſumption however ſeems rather to lie on the ſide of benevolence. To give the *ability* of obtaining good, is, in effect, to give the *good itſelf*. Our *imagination* at leaſt, if not our *underſtanding*, readily aſſents to this concluſion: and if we look no farther than ſenſible objects, *experience* alſo will juſtify us in aſſerting, that in the ordinary

ordinary course of things, he who *can* be happy, *will* be so.

But, if this rule of God's government be no proof of his malevolence, it may seem at least to prove, that he is *not* benevolent. For had happiness been the end proposed by our Creator, we are ready to think, he would have provided some *certain means* to make us happy. Human actions are *uncertain*. Therefore happiness was *not* the end proposed.

This is plausible; yet, when examined to the bottom, will be found to have no real weight. For,

1st. The argument proves *too much*. It leads to a total rejection of all final causes. Even the successive existence of plants and animals must no longer be imputed to design. For we see, in many particular instances, that the means provided fail of success.

2dly. The uncertainty complained of could no way have been prevented, without making it *impossible* for us to attain to any considerable degree of happiness. Were the advantages we enjoy in the present state of things independent on our actions, no man would act: and, if you destroy all the *active* pleasures of our nature, you destroy by far the most valuable part of our enjoyments; all, indeed, that makes the condition of a man better than that

of a brute. I might have ſaid, *more* than all. For even brutes, as it ſeems, have ſome pleaſure from acting.—More particularly,

THAT a man's happineſs ſhould depend on his *own* actions, was plainly neceſſary, in order to provoke the exertion of his mental faculties; to make him *reaſon, judge, chooſe*: which very acts conſtitute much of his happineſs; improve the pleaſures ariſing from other ſources; and fill up thoſe vacancies of ſenſual gratification, which would otherwiſe be attended with diſguſt and uneaſineſs.

THAT the happineſs of *one* man ſhould depend on the actions of *another*, was neceſſary, in order to give us the pleaſures of *benevolent* actions and paſſions; of *ſelf-approbation*; of *fame*: all of them principal ingredients in human happineſs.

I KNOW not what more can be urged, on the oppoſite ſide, unleſs it ſhould be ſuppoſed, that another, and a different, ſyſtem, might have been formed; in which ſenſible beings ſhould have been no more than *paſſive* inſtruments; capable of *receiving* pleaſures, not of *procuring* them; pleaſures to us unknown, and inconceivable *.

BUT

* Such was the Epicurean paradiſe. Quod beatum eternumque ſit, nec habere ipſum *negoti* quicquam, nec exhibere alteri.

But this ſuppoſition is only a dream. The poſſibility of ſuch a ſyſtem, as is here deſcribed, cannot be ſupported, even by the ſlighteſt proof. We can only reaſon from what we *know*; not ſurely from what we *fancy*. We *know*, that action is a continual ſource of happineſs: but we do *not* know, that happineſs *might* have been attained *without* it. Imagination only, not reaſon, ſuggeſted the idea.

2. That men are excited to act by *puniſhments*, as well as rewards.

alteri.—In anſwer therefore to the inquiry, quæ vita Deorum ſit? Velleius ſays (Cic. de Nat. Deorum, lib. 1. c. 19.) Ea videlicet quâ nihil beatius, nihil omnibus bonis affluentius cogitari poteſt. *Nihil enim agit*; nullis occupationibus eſt implicatus; nulla *opera* molitur.——In like manner *human* happineſs is placed in animi ſecuritate, et in *omnium vacatione munerum*, c. 20.

On all which Cotta remarks, c. 37. Profectò Epicurus, quaſi pueri delicati, nihil *ceſſatione* melius exiſtimat. At ipſi tamen pueri, etiam cum ceſſent, exercitatione aliquâ ludicrâ delectantur.

So again Plutarch, ὁ μὲν ἓν ὑπὸν, ὅτι δεῖ τὸν ἐυθυμεῖν μέλλοντα μήτε πολλὰ πράσσειν μήτε ἰδίᾳ μήτε ξυνῇ, πρῶτον μὲν ἡμῖν πολυπειθῆ τὴν ἐυθυμίαν παθίστησι, γινομένην ἄγιον ἀπραξίας.—ἔπειτα τὸ ψεῦδος ἐστι τὸ ἐυθυμεῖν τὺς μὴ πολλὰ πράσσοντας. Περὶ ἐυθυμίας.

See the ſame writer in his piece Non poſſe ſuav. viv. ſec. Epicurum. Ἀτοπίαι δὲ τὸ πρακτικὸν ὄσας ἡδονὰς ἔχει διελθεῖν. Αὐτοὶ δὲ δὴ πῶς λέγουσιν, ὡς τὸ τὺ ΠΟΙΕΙΝ ἡδὺ ἐστι τῦ ΠΑΣΧΕΙΝ, and what follows. And again, πῶς μέλλει τῆς ψυχῆς χαρᾶς—μέγεθος ὑποπτεῦσαι δεῖ πράξεων, &c.

THIS again is no proof of *malevolence*. For there is room to ſuppoſe, and ſome reaſon to believe, that *rewards alone* would be ineffectual. In *human* governments we know and feel that they are. Now *that* evil can be no argument of a *bad* intention, which appears to be neceſſary for accompliſhing a *good* one.—But the neceſſity of penal ſanctions will beſt appear, if we attend to a particular inſtance.

IT is certain, then, that *rewards only* would have been an inſufficient proviſion for the preſervation of the individual, and the continuance of the ſpecies. With reſpect to the *former*, we ſhould have wanted the admonitions of hunger, thirſt, and wearineſs, to inform us of the *times*, when nature demands ſupply. In *both* caſes, if the appetites were removed, men might forbear to uſe the *means* of preſervation, &c. notwithſtanding the pleaſure annexed. For the purſuit of pleaſure in one kind is often prevented by the deſire of *different* pleaſures. In *both* caſes too the appetites ſeem neceſſary to engage us in the *labour* and *hazards*, which either procure, or follow, the gratification. To make this ſtill more plain, let us ſuppoſe the pleaſure of food to be what it is, and all other circumſtances to continue; but let the uneaſy ſenſations of hunger be entirely removed: could theſe ſenſations be ſpared without inconvenience? Certainly not. For, 1ſt, as has been ſaid, they inform us of the *times*, when nature wants a ſupply. 2dly, they prevent us from

from *overlooking* or *forgetting* our ſuſtenance, which we might eaſily do, when engaged in other purſuits. 3dly, they are requiſite to overcome our *indolence*; which otherwiſe would often prevent the labour neceſſary for acquiring ſuſtenance.

SHOULD it be propoſed to obtain the ſame ends by increaſing the pleaſures of gratification, you will increaſe alſo the temptation to exceſs. If you would have the pleaſure ſtop at the very point, where gratification becomes hurtful; you require ſuch a conſtitution of body, as you have no reaſon to ſuppoſe within the bounds of poſſibility. Or, admitting it to be poſſible, who can ſay that it might not be productive of greater loſs or harm? The preſent conſtitution *may* be neceſſary (and *here*, it muſt be obſerved, we contend for nothing more) to our perfection and happineſs.—— Now ſuch creatures as *we* are *could* not be preſerved without the appetite of *hunger*: and as for *other* kind of creatures, we are ſurely not judges of the different ways in which it was *poſſible* for the Deity to form and preſerve animal bodies.

THE ſame method of reaſoning, or nearly the ſame, may eaſily be applied to all other uneaſy ſenſations, by which we are led to fulfil the ends of nature.—But the reader need not be told, that it is not pretended to give a *full* ſolution of this difficulty. *Why* God chooſes

to

to govern by *penal* ſanctions, we know but imperfectly: yet we know enough to diſcern that theſe ſanctions will furniſh no proof againſt divine benevolence. We ſee plainly, that, as the *preſent* ſyſtem is formed, they are neceſſary to the moſt beneficial and important purpoſes; and therefore they afford no degree of evidence againſt a kind and benevolent intention (already ſupported by ſo many clear and ſtrong preſumptions) in the Author of Nature.

3. That men are excited to *hurtful*, as well as uſeful, actions.

This circumſtance again may appear, on a ſlight view, unfavourable to the doctrine of divine benevolence. For it is this part of our conſtitution, which evidently gives occaſion to all the *vice*, and moſt of the miſery, that is in the world.—Yet neither here is the concluſion juſtly founded*.

For the *general* principles, by which men are excited to action *are* what they *ought* to be. Let them but continue general; and you cannot ſo much as *imagine* a change for the better. The difficulty then will fall under another head, viz. the *conſtancy* of the laws by which the

* Plutarch (againſt the Stoics) ſeems to have miſapprehended this matter. He inſiſts that *vice* is *not beneficial*. We allow it. But we maintain that it *ſprings* from beneficial *principles*; principles *tending* to good, tho', in ſome particular inſtances, giving *occaſion* to evil.

the world is governed.—Or, if any doubt ſhould ſtill remain, the ſubject will be reſumed, when we come to ſpeak of the *oppoſition* made by human beings to the counſels of their Maker.

II.

Of the uniformity of the divine adminiſtration.

It is an undiſputed fact, that the world is governed, to a very great degree, by *invariable* laws: and this rigour of divine adminiſtration has been thought an argument againſt divine benevolence.—The courſe of nature, it is ſaid, never changes. Had this courſe been intended for our benefit, the laws of it would have been *ſuſpended* in every inſtance, where they obſtruct, or defeat, the end propoſed. In fact they are *not* ſuſpended. Our benefit therefore was *not intended*. At leaſt, the harm ariſing from the preſent conſtitution of things, in *ſome* inſtances, is as much a proof of *malevolence*, as the good produced in *other* inſtances of benevolence.

Before an anſwer be given to this allegation, I muſt aſk, Whether the ſuſpenſion required, of the laws of nature, be an *apparent*, or an *inviſible* ſuſpenſion. Surely not an apparent ſuſpenſion, the *preſent* method purſued by Providence being evidently more advantageous to mankind. Without the *appearance* of uniformity

mity there could be no room for human *ſkill*, and no motive to human *action*. Not the former: becauſe ſkill of every kind is founded on conſtant experience. Not the latter: becauſe no man would ever be induced to act, if he were equally ſure, *without* acting, of ſucceſs in every undertaking; and he could not *but* be ſure, if he ſaw, that the courſe of nature was continually accommodated to *his* wants and deſires.

But, as this is a ſubject of ſome importance, it may be proper to conſider it a little more particularly.—I ſay, then, that the happineſs of man depends on the exerciſe of his faculties: that is, on the right application of his active powers, under the direction of his underſtanding. But the underſtanding can give *no* direction for our conduct, unleſs we can judge of the effects and conſequences of actions propoſed to our deliberation: and we only judge of theſe (we have no other *poſſible* method of judging) from the effects of *like* actions in times paſt. If then ſimilar effects do not conſtantly flow from ſimilar cauſes, we ſhall have *no* rule of conduct at all.—Experience of the paſt is our only guide for the future. We have no other way of knowing that food will nouriſh, or that arſenic will poiſon us. We have no other way of diſcerning any connection between the ſeed we put into the ground, and the harveſt we expect to reap. It is thus we learn, that labour muſt prepare the ſoil; that

ſun

ſun and rain will cheriſh the riſing plant, and bring it at length to maturity and perfection. Were not like cauſes to produce like effects, we could form no judgment at all of future events; and therefore our underſtanding could never regulate our conduct.

Some perhaps may imagine that all the advantages propoſed *might* be obtained without *perfect* uniformity. The objectors, it ſeems, only demand, that the courſe of nature ſhould be ſuſpended *occaſionally*, when men would loſe, or ſuffer, from its continuance; and in all other caſes ſhould remain invariable. Now here, it may be thought, would be a *general* experience, affording ſufficient probability to direct our conduct. Yet, while we enjoyed all the benefit of the preſent conſtitution of things, we ſhould ſuffer none of the harm.

It would not perhaps be eaſy for men to agree on the particular caſes in which the laws of nature ought to be ſuſpended; or for Providence to accommodate them all at once ſuitably to their various wants and wiſhes.—But, not to inſiſt on this, I anſwer, that, on the ſuppoſition here made, we ſhould learn from experience, that the good ſucceſs of all our *deſigns* was infallible. For either they would ſucceed in the *ordinary* courſe of things, or the courſe of things would be *altered*, to prevent our diſappointment. We ſhould therefore ſoon find, that *ſkill* and *prudence* were perfectly inſignificant,

cant, and conſequently the very exiſtence of deſign and contrivance would become in the end *impoſſible*. In like manner, we ſhould learn from experience, that the objects of our averſion were *conſtantly* removed, and our deſires *conſtantly* gratified, either with, or without, the concurrence of our own *endeavours*; in the one caſe, by the ordinary courſe of things, in the other, by a ſeaſonable deviation from it. We ſhould therefore ſoon diſcover, that human action and induſtry were altogether *inſignificant*; and conſequently ſhould have no motive for acting at all.

EVEN a *ſecret* ſuſpenſion of natural laws would be attended with the ſame inconvenience, if men once found themſelves *ſecure* (no matter by what means) from want, diſappointment, and pain of every kind. For they would juſt as much, and as confidently, depend on this unſeen interpoſition, as in the former caſe on a viſible and extraordinary Providence; and, in either of theſe caſes, they would want the chief enjoyments of human life; all that ariſe from the exertion of their beſt faculties in promoting and ſecuring their mutual happineſs.

SHALL we ſtill be told, that God might *occaſionally* deviate in an *unſeen* manner from the general laws of his adminiſtration? that he might do this, to a conſiderable degree; yet not ſo, as to encourage men in *truſting* to theſe extra-

extraordinary interpoſitions? and that therefore human ſkill and induſtry might ſtill continue, and only be employed with greater ſucceſs?

I anſwer—

1ſt. THAT, in *proportion* as men owed their ſucceſs to ſuch ſecret cauſes, their ſkill and their induſtry would become *leſs* important. Therefore they would be *leſs encouraged* to ſtudy and purſue the improvement of their happineſs: and, in ſome degree, therefore the ſame inconveniences would ſtill remain. But,

2dly. So far as theſe ſecret interpoſitions are truly proper for us, I ſee no reaſon to deny, that God *actually interpoſes*. For, ſince, by the very ſuppoſition, the deviations, to be made from the ordinary courſe of nature, are always to remain *undiſcovered*; it can never be concluded, that God does *not* deviate, only becauſe no diſcovery is made.—It is in this ſenſe, that *reaſon* allows us to hope, and *revelation* authoriſes us to expect, a *particular providence*. It is in this ſenſe, that we may reaſonably promiſe ourſelves ſucceſs in our *petitions* to Heaven, without looking for miracles: and without that arbitrary aſſumption, which has been advanced by ſome very elegant writers*, viz. that the original laws of the univerſe were artificially accommodated to all the future occaſions and wants

* See Woolaſton, Sect. 5.

wants of every devout petitioner. It is in this ſenſe alſo, that we are promiſed the aſſiſtance of God's *Holy Spirit*: the *effects* of which may appear in a life of piety and virtue; but the *operations* are ſecret, not to be diſtinguiſhed from the workings of our own minds.

To return from this digreſſion, I ſuppoſe it has ſufficiently appeared, that the uniformity, with which God governs the world, is abſolutely *neceſſary* in a diſpenſation of things, adapted to the uſes of an intelligent and active being.

III. *Of the oppoſition made by human agents to the ends of divine government.*

It has often been alleged, that the natural ſyſtem, however well and wiſely framed, is liable to be perverted by the folly and wickedneſs of *man*; ſo that the cauſes, which *might* have produced good, are made *in fact* the means and inſtruments of evil *. Now the *intention* of God, we are told, is not to be collected from the *poſſible* effects of natural cauſes, but from the effects they are *likely* to produce under human direction: and ſince men have both a *power* of doing harm, and innumerable *temptations* to do it, thoſe effects muſt frequently be *evil*. Evil

* Τὸ γε πολλαχῆ εἶναι ἐργώδη καὶ δύσκολον τὸν βίον, ἄγαν ἀληθὲς. Καὶ γὰρ εἰ φύσει τοιοῦτον ἔχει τὸν τρόπον, ὑπό γε ΗΜΩΝ εἰς τοῦτο ἀφῖχθαι διαφθορᾶς. Plut. Conſ. ad Apoll.

Evil then, as well as good, was *intended* by our Maker.

Here again, as in the laſt inſtance, the *fact* is not to be conteſted. Unfortunately for the race of mankind, it is confirmed to us by daily and hourly experience.——But many things remain to be well conſidered, before the concluſion drawn from this fact can either be juſtified or excuſed.

1ſt. Let it be obſerved, that the natural ſyſtem may be *improved*, as well as perverted, by the conduct of mankind. If its good effects are liable to be obſtructed by the weakneſs and wickedneſs of human agents, they are capable alſo of being continued and increaſed by human ſkill and virtue: and this advantage ſhould undoubtedly be put in the balance againſt ſuch occaſional perverſions. Probably it may be found ſufficient to outweigh the miſchief complained of. For men are more likely to uſe their endeavours for improving and bettering their condition, than to draw unneceſſary evils from a ſyſtem naturally beneficial. The moſt that can be alleged is, that the preſent ſyſtem has a *mixed* tendency; and, if the good preponderate (the *contrary* of which does not appear), ſuch a tendency is ſurely no proof of malevolence. But this is not all. For,

2dly. BOTH our *power* of doing ill, and our *temptations* to do it, are the reſult of a wiſe and good conſtitution of nature.

1. THE *power* is derived from certain general laws of evident good tendency; namely, that each man's happineſs is made to depend on his actions; and that, in very many inſtances, the happineſs of one man is made to depend on the actions of another. Theſe laws have been already vindicated; and appear to be inſeparably connected with the buſineſs and the pleaſures of human life. A world, in which nothing depended on ourſelves, however it might have ſuited ſome imaginary race of beings, would never have ſuited *mankind*; or, rather, would have transformed them into other creatures; from intelligent and active beings to beings immerſed in ſenſe, and incapable of all higher gratifications.

2. NOR has the other part of the objection been altogether neglected. We all know, by fatal experience, that we have not only the power of doing ill, but are alſo *tempted* to do it. Yet we have ſeen, that no inference can be drawn from this confeſſion to the prejudice of divine benevolence; for that the *general* principles of the human mind, notwithſtanding accidental variations, are what they ought to be. In ſingle perſons, it muſt be owned, the balance of the paſſions is very frequently deſtroyed;

ſtroyed; ſeldom indeed preſerved with exactneſs and truth. But then the defects, to be found in one man, are ſupplied by the exceſſes in another. So that, if you conſider the *whole* ſpecies, you will neither find too much, nor too little, of any principle in the human mind. Indolence and ambition, avarice and ſenſuality, reſentment and compaſſion, if not in the ſame perſons, yet in different perſons, counteract and balance each other. Nor is there a ſingle ſentiment implanted in our nature, which can either be increaſed, or leſſened, in the *whole* race of mankind, without loſs or harm to the human ſpecies; unleſs indeed you aſſume a liberty of altering *many* things at a time; of forming a new and fantaſtic ſyſtem, perhaps made up of inconſiſtent parts, and beyond the bounds of poſſibility itſelf. So true is that celebrated paſſage of Cicero, de Nat. Deorum, lib. 2. c. 34. *Siquis corrigere aliquod volet, aut deterius faciet, aut id, quod fieri non potuit, deſiderabit.*

THESE conſiderations will receive additional force, if there be any ground for what was intimated in the former part of this treatiſe, that the views of Providence extend beyond the limits of this preſent life. Many things here carry the *appearance* at leaſt of a ſtate of *trial* and *diſcipline*; a ſtate not to be conceived without opportunities of doing ill, and temptations to do it. Allow only the preſent life to be connected

nected with a better, and every objection to divine benevolence ceaſes of courſe. Is it not then more reaſonable to admit and maintain this connection, than to oppoſe our viſionary difficulties (founded, for the moſt part, on the narrowneſs of our views, and the obſcurity of our conceptions) to thoſe innumerable marks of wiſdom and goodneſs, which ſhine forth through the whole creation?

BUT whether we believe, or diſbelieve, a life *to come* (a ſubject on which *revelation* only is capable of giving us *full* ſatisfaction), one thing is certain, viz. that the *preſent* life furniſhes no reaſonable pretence, nor any colourable excuſe, for diſputing the goodneſs of our Maker. The *words* of *Cicero*, on this ſubject, are ſurely more reaſonable than his *practice*: Mala—et impia conſuetudo eſt *contra Deos* diſputandi, ſive ex animo id fit, ſive ſimulatè. De Nat. Deorum, lib. 2. c. 27.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

PART

PART III.

IT has already appeared, that the present constitution of things affords *many* strong presumptions of a benevolent intention in the Author of Nature; and that *nothing* is to be found, which will justify a *contrary* conclusion, even in the most doubtful and difficult parts of divine administration. It must be owned, however, that the evidence produced would be either subverted or shaken, if full proof could be brought, that, in the *result* of things, these *seemingly* kind intentions have been all frustrated; and that a large overbalance of evil has actually taken place. In *human* works, it is true, the *design* cannot always be inferred from the *effect*. For *men* may be deceived and disappointed. But in

divine works ſuch miſtakes are impoſſible *. *Particular* evils may ariſe in a ſyſtem whoſe general tendency is good; as we have ſeen in various inſtances. But a *prepollency* of evil can be *no* accident. If the *whole world* appear to be little more than a ſcene of wretchedneſs and miſery, we ſhall naturally ſuſpect, that nothing better was *intended*. On this ſuppoſition, we might be led to doubt, with great appearance of reaſon, whether it were conſiſtent with the wiſdom of God, not to *foreſee* the evil; or with his goodneſs, not to *prevent* it. What Cotta ſays of *reaſon* [Cic. de Nat. Deorum, lib. 3. c. 27.] might then be applied to *life itſelf*, and all the flattering hopes that ſurround it: Satius fuerit omnino non datam, quam tantâ cum pernicie datam.

But the fact here ſuppoſed has never *yet* been proved.—We believe and truſt, that it never *will*. Inſtead of coming to this gloomy and

* Ubi igitur locus fuit errori Deorum? Nam patrimonia ſpe bene tradendi relinquimus; quâ poſſumus falli. Deus falli qui potuit?—Cotta in Cic. de Nat. Deorum, lib. 3. c. 31.

Plutarch (de rep. Stoic.) juſtly repreſents Chryſippus as inconſiſtent with himſelf, when he affirms that the gods ὡς ἐνι βέλτιστα πρᾶττειν, yet that men, ὡς ἐνι χείριστα πραττειν.

and uncomfortable conclusion *, we may more reasonably infer from the apparent *intentions* of nature, that the *success* has been answerable: and that good, *prepollent* good, is the result of all.—Were it possible for us to support this inference by clear and full *experience*, we might form a *decisive* argument for the divine benevolence.—The happiness, we would say, which has in fact been produced by the present system, is much greater than the misery. This happiness has arisen from the *nature* of the system itself; not from foreign, or accidental, causes. It was therefore *intended* by the Author of the system; or the system was formed with a *design* of producing happiness. It appears then that the happiness of created beings is an object *pleasing* in the eyes of their Creator: or, in other words, that he is a *benevolent* Being.

All that needs to be inforced, in this argument, is the fact supposed as its foundation: viz. that happiness is *actually* prepollent in this system. This, as has been already ob-

 served;

* ἆρά γε δικὴς ἑτέρας οἴεσθε δεῖσθα τοὺς ἀναιροῦντας τὴν πρόνοιαν, καὶ οὐχ ἱκανὴν ἔχειν, ἐκκόπτοντας ἑαυτῶν ἡδονὴν καὶ χαρὰν τοσαύτην; Plut. Non posse suav. vivi sec. Epicurum.

And again, τῆς μὲν εὐτυχίας τὸ ἥδιστον καλύουσιν, ταῖς δὲ δυστυχίαις ἀποστροφὴν οὐκ ἀπολείπουσιν—with much more to the same purpose. The whole of it is perhaps one of the finest passages in Plutarch's writings.

ſerved, is a ſubject of difficult inveſtigation. We can only *judge* of thoſe parts which are known to us, and *conjecture* of thoſe which are unknown.

1. THEN let each man conſider *himſelf*.— Does he not think life a benefit? Would he not think the loſs of it a misfortune? Are not his pleaſures more frequent, though leſs attended to, than his pains? Are not the deep impreſſions, made by theſe, to be imputed more to the rarity, than the degree of them? Does he not paſs a conſiderable part of *every* day in a manner which gives him *ſome* pleaſure? Are not *thoſe* days comparatively *few*, in which he has found any conſiderable degree of *bodily* pain? Is not his uneaſineſs of *mind* leſs frequent and permanent, than his chearfulneſs and ſatisfaction?

To theſe queſtions, no doubt, different anſwers will be given by different men. But he who anſwers them all in the affirmative, has at leaſt *one* good argument, and in which he cannot well be deceived, for admitting the doctrine of *prepollent good*.

2. LET each man conjecture, as well as he can, concerning the happineſs of his *friends* and *acquaintance*, and of all thoſe who come under his *immediate* notice. — Poſſibly he will find many of them furniſhed with various means

of

of pleaſure; few of them ſubject to great miſfortunes: many more healthy than ſick; many more, competently provided with the conveniences of life, than ſtruggling with want and difficulties; many more, poſſeſſed of friends and relations, whom they love and who love them, than oppreſſed and perſecuted by enemies; many more, happy in the hope of future good, than alarmed by the fear of impending evil.—He who finds this to be a true repreſentation, will be ſtill more ſtrongly inclined to admit the *prepollency* of good in our preſent ſyſtem.

It muſt not be thought an objection to this concluſion, that many more are *poor*, than *rich*. For we only give the name of *rich* to thoſe who are *peculiarly* ſo: as of * beautiful, wiſe, ſtrong, tall, to thoſe who are *above* the common rate. It will be enough to ſatisfy an impartial inquirer, if he finds many more in *plenty*, than in *want*: i. e. able to provide what their ſtation in life requires, and *not unhappy* from the deſire of a higher ſtation. †

3. Let

* So Balbus in Cic. de Nat. Deorum, lib. 2. c. 28. Motus enim quiſque *formoſus* eſt? Athenis cum eſſem, è gregibus Epheborum vix ſinguli reperiebantur.

† Seneca goes farther (Conſ. ad Helv. c. 12.) Aſpice, quanto major ſit pars pauperum, quos nihilo notabis triſtiores, ſolicitioreſque divitibus: imo neſcio an eo *lætiores* ſint, quo animus eorum in pauciora diſtringitur.

3. LET each man examine the moſt authentic accounts of *diſtant* times and places. Poſſibly he will ſee cauſe to conjecture, that the perſons *unknown* to him have not, in general, been leſs happy than thoſe he knows. If, in other ages and nations, the circumſtances of mankind appear not ſo favourable as in ours; it is probable, however, that the wants and the tempers of men are every where *accommodated* to their circumſtances, at leaſt in a conſiderable degree; and that others may even be *happy* in thoſe ſituations, in which *we* ſhould think ourſelves exquiſitely miſerable *.

THUS the inhabitants of ſome parts of *Africa* might appear to *us* to be in the loweſt and moſt wretched ſtate; as wanting almoſt every advantage of ſocial life. No *arts*, *learning*, *laws*: and of courſe, a very precarious enjoyment of their lives and poſſeſſions. Yet it has been found, that theſe very men, when removed to

* Nullum invenies exilium, in quo non aliquis *animi cauſâ* moretur. Hen. ad Helvid. c. 6.

And again——

Nihil miſerum eſt, quod in naturam conſuetudo perduxit. Paullatim enim voluptati ſunt, quæ neceſſitate cœperunt. Nulla illis domicilia (he ſpeaks of the Germans) nullæ ſedes ſunt; niſi quas laſſitudo in diem poſuit; vilis, & hic quærendus manu, victus; horrenda iniquitas cœli; intecta corpora: hoc quod tibi calamitas videtur, tot gentium vita eſt. Sen. de Prov. c. 4.

to England, have regretted the loſs of their own country, and expreſſed the utmoſt impatience to return to it. Which could not poſſibly have been the caſe, if they had not, on the *whole*, been *pleaſed* with their former ſituation.

If this appears to be a *juſt* view of the ſtate of mankind, it muſt be owned, that the preſent ſyſtem of things produces *prepollent* good. If it be controverted, the objections will probably fall under one or other of the following heads *.

1. That, even in *peaceful* and ſettled times, the pains of life exceed the pleaſures.—Or, if this be given up,

2. That the calamities of *war* are fatal to the repoſe and happineſs of the world; and that theſe calamities are ſo frequent, as to involve a very conſiderable part of the human ſpecies. Or

3. That many innocent perſons are rendered unhappy by *tyranny* and *perſecution*.—To which may be added,

4. That

* Theſe objections are taken from a beautiful declamation of *Wollaſton*'s, in the 9th ſect. of his Religion of Nature delineated.

4. That the *evils* of human life constitute the chief objects of *history*; and that this clearly shews the present world to be a place of misery, not of happiness.

I.

It is alleged, that, even in peaceful and settled times, the pains men suffer exceed their pleasures. For that

1. They who are most successful, have many cares and troubles, little sincere pleasures: and

2. Numbers of men are altogether unsuccessful.

1. They who are successful in life have many cares and troubles, which are very sensibly felt; and they have little sincere pleasure to balance these feelings.—*Childhood*, we are told, suffers much uneasiness from the restraint and discipline, to which it is subject; and receives no pleasures in return, but such as are trifling and vain.—*Manhood* is exposed to inconveniencies in the transaction of *business*, from the negligence, perverseness, or knavery, of those with whom we deal; to *domestic* disquiets, from the faults of our wives, or children, or servants; and to frequent vexation, from the unkindness, or misbehaviour, even of our common

mon acquaintance and neighbours. Its enjoyments, on the other hand, are deceitful; mixed with uneaſineſs; difficult alſo to be attained, as uſually requiring the concurrence of a variety of circumſtances; and laſtly, of ſhort duration, ſoon loſt and forgotten, as if they had never been.—*Old age* is ſubject to ſtill greater difficulties, and has leſs ability to ſtruggle with them. The loſs of our friends and relations, the pains and ſickneſs we muſt uſually expect in that period of life, are ſurely very trying circumſtances.

To all this may be added a general remark, which is thought a full confirmation of the deſcription here given; viz. that the moſt *fortunate* of men would not wiſh a *repetition* of their paſt lives.

In anſwer to this objection, it may be ſaid more truly, that the *ſufferings* of childhood are trifling, the pleaſures great. — We only eſteem them inſignificant, becauſe they are not ſuited to the taſte of mature age. It is enough, that they ſuit the capacity and inclination of thoſe who enjoy them: and they are far from being balanced, nay they are recommended and improved, by intervals of reſtraint. In this period of our lives, as in every other, our time is divided between amuſement and buſineſs: the conſtant returns of which makes both more agreeable. In ſhort, the happineſs

of

of children is apparent, to whatever cauſe we may impute it, from their perpetual chearfulneſs and fulneſs of ſpirits.

THE common cares of *manhood* hold no proportion with its ſatisfactions. It may ſafely be affirmed, that, in all ordinary caſes, the pleaſure ariſing from our *domeſtic* affections far exceeds the anxiety which attends them: and, in many inſtances too, the anxiety itſelf is mixed with pleaſure. Miſbehaviour in the perſons, with whom we have an intercourſe of *buſineſs*, occaſions indeed inconvenience and diſappointment. But theſe things give little diſturbance to a man who is *accuſtomed* to expect them; and often occaſion *pleaſure*, by giving room for our ſkill and prudence, in guarding againſt them. For, without oppoſition, there could be no victory. As for *quarrels* with our acquaintance and neighbours; they cannot be a very conſiderable miſchief. For no man, I ſuppoſe, to avoid this evil, would wiſh to paſs his days in ſolitude. On the other hand, the *enjoyments* of this ſtate are various: ſome of them permanent; others tranſient indeed, but anticipated by hope, or delightful even on reflection.---If the objects of our wiſhes are found not anſwerable to our expectations, this deſtroys not our happineſs. For *new* wiſhes are formed; and new pleaſures received from every ſtep we take towards their gratification. If the enjoyments themſelves are not what they ſeem;

seem; yet the very *hope* of obtaining them is a constant source of happiness.

For the comforts and pleasures of *old age*, see *Cicero de Senectute*, where the subject is indeed exhausted.

The fallacy of the *general* remark is very obvious. Whatever pleasures we may have enjoyed in our past lives, we expect *no* pleasure from the repetition. Novelty and variety either are, or seem to be, *essential* to our happiness: and hence it comes to pass, that the frequent returns of the *same* enjoyments appear, in imagination, flat and insipid. But no conclusion can be drawn from this appearance; which in truth is nothing more than an illusion of the fancy. Add to this, that the ills of life are perhaps better *remembered* than the goods. The former affect us more forcibly, because they are less frequent: the latter, being familiar and common, make no deep impression on the mind. On *both* accounts we deceive ourselves in the judgments we form of our past lives.

Thus far, however, we have only seen the condition of mankind in its fairest light: we have only attended to that part of our species who are *successful* in the world. But,

2. Numbers of men are altogether *unſucceſsful*. They never obtain a comfortable ſettlement, or they are afterwards deprived of it. They are unhappy in the miſbehaviour of their families and friends, or in the loſs of them. Their wiſeſt ſchemes are defeated by untoward accidents: and they languiſh under misfortunes, of mind, or body, or fortune, which no care or caution was capable of preventing. Theſe caſes, indeed, are ſo frequent, and ſo ſtriking, that they are become the daily ſubject of converſation: every hour almoſt preſents us with ſome new ſcene of want or miſery; and objects of diſtreſs are continually before our eyes.

To this may be anſwered, that the picture is not fairly drawn. It is heightened beyond probability and nature.

In times of peace (for of ſuch only are we ſpeaking) the far *greater* part of mankind both obtain and preſerve a competent ſhare of the neceſſaries and conveniences of life. Many of thoſe who do not, ſuffer leſs than is imagined; and many acquire by habit an ability to bear their misfortunes. Others meet with unexpected relief and comfort: others end their cares and their lives together.

The *miſbehaviour* of families and friends, tho' a ſevere affliction to *ſome* diſpoſitions, is not

ſo

ſo to *all*: with many it is not of force enough to deſtroy their chearfulneſs and happineſs. *Small* faults in thoſe we love deprive us not of the pleaſure we receive from them: *great* faults deſtroy the affection we bear to them, and leave us unconcerned ſpectators of what they do or ſuffer. The affliction we feel on the *loſs* of our near relations, is a proof of the great pleaſure we once received from them: and the pleaſure was *permanent*; the grief ſoon paſſes away.

NOR is it to be wondered, that we ſee and hear ſo much of the evils of life. Among the vaſt numbers of the human ſpecies, there may be frequent accidents and calamities; yet *many more*, who eſcape, than who ſuffer them. If they were more common, they would be leſs remarked. They are frequently made ſubjects of converſation; becauſe men are curious to hear of ſingular events, and take a pleaſure in indulging their compaſſion.

II.

WHATEVER may be ſaid of peaceful times, *war*, we are told, and the *conſequences* of war, are fatal to multitudes. Many are deprived of all the comforts of life: many more of life itſelf; not thoſe only who fall in the field, but thoſe who are expoſed, by military plunder, to nakedneſs and hunger, and periſh for want of the neceſſary means of preſervation. Nor are

theſe

theſe calamities rare in the world, and extraordinary. Unhappily, they are ſo frequent, as to involve a great part of the human ſpecies.

In abatement, however, of this accumulated charge, ſeveral conſiderations may be offered.

1ſt. The *lives* loſt in war are foreign to the purpoſe. For it ought not to be conſidered as a diminution of a man's happineſs, that his life is ended by a *muſquet*, rather than a *fever*.

2dly. The *dangers* attending a ſtate of war become, from habit, ſo familiar, that the perſons expoſed to them feel little uneaſineſs.

3dly. The *poverty*, and perhaps *ſlavery*, which follow, may indeed in *ſome* men produce great affliction; but not in the *generality*. Theſe evils are only felt by men who know what it is to be *rich* and *free*. The reſt ſuffer no great change. They always have been, and they continue to be, ſubject to *labour*; and receive, in return for it, a competent ſhare, ſometimes a plentiful ſhare, of the conveniences of life.—*Slavery* was, in ancient times, the lot of every priſoner of war: and muſt have extended therefore to great numbers of men. But the condition of ſlaves is uſually much leſs miſerable, than we are apt to imagine. They may ſuffer, no doubt, and too often do ſuffer, from the cruelty of their *maſter*. But it is his *intereſt* to

uſe

uſe them well: and *moſt* men, we may ſuppoſe, underſtand their intereſt, and purſue it. Even in this land of liberty, men have ſometimes been found, who wiſhed us to follow the *example* of the ancients; and maintained that the inſtitution of *domeſtic ſlavery* was beneficial to the world *.

4thly. It ſhould not be quite forgotten, that, while the condition of ſome men is rendered worſe by war, that of others is rendered *better*.

Indeed, the *whole* number, made unhappy by theſe public calamities, bears no proportion to the bulk of mankind. In nations totally reduced by conqueſt, it has ſometimes happened, that a very conſiderable part of the inhabitants have been reduced to ſervitude. But theſe inſtances are rare. Very few occur in our own times; and we may reaſonably hope, that the practice of antiquity, notwithſtanding it has met with ſome able advocates, will never again revive among civilized nations.

III. It

* It appears from innumerable inſtances, that ſlaves, among the Greeks and Romans, lived in a very different manner from *modern* ſlaves. Judge from the following paſſage of Seneca, de Prov. c. 1.——Cum videris bonos viros, acceptoſque Diis, laborare, ſudare, per arduum aſcendere, malos autem *laſcivire et voluptatibus fluere*, cogita filiorum nos modeſtiâ delectari, *vernularum licentiâ*.

III.

It is ſaid, that many innocent perſons are rendered unhappy by *tyranny* and *perſecution*. But,

1ſt. The effects of *tyranny* are uſually confined to a *few* perſons; ſeldom extend, unleſs indirectly, to the *body* of a people. Even under the government of ſuch wretches as *Nero* and *Domitian*, many thouſands of men, thro' all parts of the empire, lived in plenty, and quiet, and ſecurity *. Nay, the diſtant provinces were perhaps *more* ſecure, than when expoſed to the plunder of republican governors. With regard to the few, who become objects of envy, or jealouſy, or reſentment, they muſt, of courſe, fall victims to abſolute power. But that power is more frequently exerted in *ſhortening* men's lives, than in making them *miſerable* while they live.

2dly. *Perſecution* is indeed confined to no rank of men. No age or ſex eſcapes its fury. But then it is uſually of ſhort continuance: for either the objects of it are deſtroyed, or, by collecting themſelves into numbers, and making a vigorous reſiſtance, they are able to ſhake off the yoke which oppreſſes them. The perſecution

* See in Plut. περὶ εὐθυμίας, a deſcription of the general happineſs men enjoyed, I know not under what prince, but certainly under a deſpotic government.—Δεῖ δὲ καὶ τὰ κοινὰ, &c.

ſecution indeed of the primitive Chriſtians, even when freed from the rubbiſh of uncertain traditions, and diveſted of every circumſtance, which folly or fraud has annexed to it, will ſtill furniſh ſomething like an exception to this remark. Yet the numbers, we know, of thoſe who ſuffered, have been greatly magnified: the intervals of quiet, which the church enjoyed, were very frequent, and ſometimes long; and very ſeldom did the miſchief prevail at once through all the parts of the Roman empire. The ſufferers, no doubt, were many of them put to death in a way more painful than the common lot of humanity. But in theſe pains they were wonderfully ſupported: perhaps by a divine ſpirit; certainly by the proſpect of a happy immortality: which was believed by them with a degree of aſſurance and confidence, that, in a manner, *counteracted* their natural feelings, and enabled them to *rejoice* under the ſevereſt tortures.

The ſingularity of this caſe has led me out of the way. But I ſhall now return; and ſhall briefly conſider the fourth head of objection already mentioned.

IV.

The objector concludes, that this world is a place of miſery, becauſe the chief objects of *hiſtory*, in every age, have been the *calamities* of

mankind.---But there is very little force in this objection. For,

1ſt. HISTORY deſcribes the *changes* only in public affairs; not the continuance of peaceful government, and the happy influence of it. Theſe, from their very nature, can have little room in an hiſtorical narration; tho' they may do well enough for a panegyrical declaimer. For it is clearly impoſſible, that a writer ſhould collect and deſcribe the various enjoyments of particular families, living under equal laws. They are not known to him: they ſeldom, if ever, become public. Whereas the oppreſſions of *magiſtrates*; the tumults of *ſubjects*; *war*, *famine*, *peſtilence*; are open to general obſervation.

2dly. IF ſuch events *could* be known, they would not be *related*. For the hiſtorian is chiefly employed about the tranſaction of *governors*, and no farther conſiders private perſons than as acting *under* them, or *againſt* them. He deſcribes, therefore, the *miſchiefs* which men ſuffer, either from the *abuſe* of power, or the *reſiſtance* made to it; from the *wars* in which they engage, or which they are obliged to *repel*; and from every inſtance of civil or of foreign *diſſenſion*. But the *good* derived from a regular adminiſtration of juſtice is paſſed over; as the ſupreme magiſtrate does not immediately appear in it.

3dly.

3dly. HISTORIANS are moſt apt to enlarge on ſuch events as will be moſt *affecting* to their readers. They know the ſtrength of compaſſion; and they know, how *pleaſing* it is to the human mind. They therefore *deſignedly* expatiate on ſcenes of diſtreſs, becauſe they are ſure men will delight in the repreſentation.

4thly. IF the obſervation have any force at all, it rather lies on the *contrary* ſide. For, ſince hiſtorians are chiefly employed in deſcribing the *evils* of life; it looks, as if they thought theſe more remarkable than the goods: and this again is a preſumption, that they are leſs *common*.---Juſt as, in a hiſtory of the heavens, an aſtronomer would not relate, day by day, the cuſtomary changes of *light* and *darkneſs*: but would enumerate *eclipſes* or *comets*, or any other unuſual phænomena.

BUT, beſide what has been ſaid, in anſwer to *each* of *Wollaſton*'s objections, they are *all* liable to one very obvious anſwer, viz. that he has only attended to *one ſide* of the queſtion. He has dwelt largely on the melancholy parts of human life; but, in a great meaſure, overlooked its enjoyments. A pen like his could, with equal eaſe and ſucceſs, have painted the *happineſs* of our preſent ſtate, and given it the appearance of a *paradiſe*.---But to form a *true* eſtimate, we muſt ſet one thing againſt another; and afterwards pronounce, if we can, on which

ſide the balance turns.——In the mean time we may diſcern, on the firſt face of things, that the Author of Nature is *not malevolent**; and that therefore we have *nothing* to oppoſe, from *fact* and *experience*, againſt the various proofs of kind *intention*, which were alleged in the firſt part of this treatiſe. Probably, indeed, an impartial inquirer will go farther than this: and will appeal to experience for a full and final *confirmation* of the doctrine of DIVINE BENEVOLENCE.

* What might be expected from a being of *that* character, is pointed out, p 180, of *Hutcheſon on the Paſſions*.—See alſo, in the ſame book, p. 182, a comparative view of our pleaſures and pains.

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

Containing a ſhort Theory of the Paſſions.

THIS is a ſubject, on which different writers, if they are attentive to what paſſes within their own minds, will unavoidably coincide. Such is the uniformity of our nature, that very nearly the ſame obſervations will occur to all thinking men. I ſhall not ſcruple therefore to repeat what has been ſaid by others; or even to uſe their expreſſions, when they ſuit my purpoſe.

Previous Remarks.

1. THE *image* of pleaſure pleaſes: the image of pain diſpleaſes.

2. AN *opinion* entertained that the pleaſure will actually be enjoyed, or the pain ſuffered, gives a much *higher* pleaſure or pain, than the bare imagination of either.

ON

ON the other hand, an opinion entertained, that we ſhall *not* enjoy the pleaſure, or *not* ſuffer the pain, cauſes the agreeable image to become painful, and the diſagreeable image to become pleaſing.—In other words thus---The efficacy of any object in producing pleaſure will give us pain, when we deſpair of obtaining it: and the efficacy of any object in cauſing pain, will give us pleaſure, when we are aſſured of our own ſecurity.

3. THE *cuſtomary cauſes* of pleaſure and pain uſually pleaſe or diſpleaſe, when they become objects of imagination; the idea of the effect being *aſſociated* with the idea of the cauſe: and, of courſe, thoſe qualities in the object, whether animate or inanimate, on which that effect depends, become agreeable or diſagreeable in imagination.

THE power we have of feeling *preſent* pleaſure or pain from reflecting on what will be, or may be, hereafter, we ſhall call *anticipation*.

4. THE effects reſulting from this power of anticipation are much altered by *compariſon*: which

1ſt, MAGNIFIES the larger, and diminiſhes the leſs, of the goods, or ills, compared;

2dly,

2dly, INCREASES the pleaſure or pain, when the *magnified* object is *expected*;

3dly, CAUSES us to feel pain, from the objects which naturally pleaſe, and pleaſure from thoſe which naturally diſpleaſe, when the *diminiſhed* object is expected.——In other words,

A CAUSE of pleaſure or pain, when compared with a more powerful one, will produce leſs effect, or none at all, or even a *contrary* effect.

5. THE thoughts and feelings of *others*, as ſoon as they are made known or imagined, excite *ſimilar* perceptions in us, provided no contrary cauſe interfere. This is called *ſympathy*. But theſe perceptions, as well as others, are liable to be interrupted, or inverted, by the influence of *compariſon*; and are often too overpowered by the ſuperior force of thoſe ſentiments which regard *ourſelves*.

IT may appear perhaps, on inquiry, that all our paſſions are derived from one or more of theſe principles: viz. Imagination, opinion, aſſociation, compariſon, ſympathy. The three firſt we comprehend under the general name of anticipation.

LET

LET us now proceed to a particular examination of each paſſion.

1ſt. WE have already obſerved, that the pleaſures or pains we feel from imagination are increaſed by opinion: and we may add too, that they increaſe in proportion to the *degree* of aſſurance, with which the event is expected.—Suppoſe now two *contrary* events to be either imagined or apprehended, and that we know not which of them will take place; in this caſe there will evidently be a *mixture* of pleaſure and pain: and either of theſe may prevail, in any aſſignable degree, in proportion to the degrees of doubt and aſſurance.

WHEN our expectations of good or evil are in this *uncertain* ſituation, the paſſions excited are called *deſire* and *averſion*: when *certain*, they are called *joy* and *ſorrow*.

As the expectation of good or ill ſucceſs appears more or leſs *probable*, deſire and averſion take the names of *hope* and *fear*.

2dly. IN each man's imagination, the *power* of enjoying pleaſure, implies the *certain* enjoyment of it. Hence the *acquiſition* of this power pleaſes; and the proſpect, or image, of ſuch acquiſition alſo pleaſes. The *power* therefore

therefore of enjoying, as well as the *actual* enjoyment, becomes an object of deſire.

FROM this ſource we derive the deſires of *liberty*, *dominion*, *property*. *Fame* too, as it gives ſome degree of power, muſt alſo become an object of deſire.

3dly. IF by any means we ſhould come to participate the pleaſures and pains of others, *their* enjoyments alſo, and the means of obtaining them, would, in like manner, become objects of deſire.

4thly. IF by any means we ſhould come to receive pain from the pleaſures of others, and pleaſure from their pains; *their* enjoyments, and the means of enjoying them, would become objects of averſion.

5thly. BESIDES a variety of ſubordinate deſires, comprehended under theſe heads, the *general* idea of happineſs, whether ſelfiſh or ſocial, conſtitutes a ſuperior object of deſire, diſtinct from each particular pleaſure, and *v. v.* and there are alſo caſes, in which it may conſtitute a diſtinct object of averſion. But the paſſions excited by general cauſes are uſually more feeble than thoſe which aim at particular objects.

THE paſſions hitherto deſcribed ariſe from reflecting either on the *ſenſations* themſelves, whether pleaſant or painful; or on the *events* which may produce, or give occaſion to them. But the various *objects* alſo, animate or inanimate, which are capable of *cauſing* pleaſure or pain, will become agreeable or diſagreeable on reflection. Hence we derive the paſſions of *eſteem* and *diſeſteem*; *benevolence* and *malevolence*; the ſenſe of *honour*, and the *moral* ſenſe.

1. *Of eſteem and diſeſteem.*

1. WE eſteem *ourſelves* for actions or qualities, which either produce *immediate* pleaſure, or increaſe the *power* of pleaſing, or the *will* to pleaſe; and we uſually take into our view the pleaſure of *others* as well as our own. Even the *external* circumſtances, in which we are placed, give riſe to like ſentiments, when they are thought capable of producing like effects. A man eſteems himſelf for his *wealth*, as well as for his wiſdom.—On the other hand, the power of giving *pain* to others, if that pain have become an object of deſire, is equally capable of producing ſelf-eſteem.

2. WE *diſeſteem* ourſelves for any obſervable *deficiency* in ſuch qualities, or for any actions or qualities, which *diſable* us from doing good

or

or harm, or which may probably be the *occaſions* of doing or ſuffering harm.

3. IN like manner we are led to eſteem *others* from obſerving in them either agreeable or uſeful qualities, and to *diſeſteem* them from obſerving either a *want* of theſe, or an appearance of *oppoſite* qualities, viz. ſuch as make them leſs able, or leſs willing, to pleaſe.

THE eſteem and diſeſteem of others is of two kinds. Qualities, which cauſe good only, excite *love*; qualities, which cauſe ill only, excite *hatred*. Thoſe which increaſe the *power*, without determining the *application*, give riſe to *reſpect*: the oppoſite defects and qualities provoke *contempt*.

1. SINCE *love* ariſes towards thoſe, in whom we diſcern agreeable or uſeful qualities, we can be at no loſs to account for the different *kinds* of love. The love of our *acquaintance* proceeds from *frequent* pleaſure received; the love of *benefactors* (or gratitude) from *great* advantages conferred: and, ſince it is natural to be pleaſed with the regards of others, we readily make returns of love to thoſe who love *us*. The love of the *ſexes* is *founded* on ſenſual pleaſures; but *increaſed* by thoſe we receive from beauty, wit, or any other accompliſhment. The love of our *offspring* depends

on

on the ſame principles. Nature indeed ſeems to have rendered our children pleaſing to us *antecedently* to any agreeable or uſeful qualities, they may happen to poſſeſs; which however are ſure not to eſcape the eye of a parent. This perhaps proceeds from the regard we have to *ourſelves*; which, by the power of aſſociation, is readily extended to every thing related to us. Doubtleſs the ſentiment is very much heightened by the pleaſures our children *actually* give us, and the many more we *expect* to receive from them.

THE occaſions of *hatred* are eaſily underſtood from what has been ſaid of its oppoſite. All qualities give birth to this paſſion, which are cauſes of *pain*: and as nothing is more painful than *contempt*, every appearance of this ſentiment is ſure to provoke reſentment. Whence ſome writers have repreſented ſuch appearances as the *only* ſource of our malignant paſſions *. But this is a fanciful ſuppoſition, and unſupported by experience. — There is beſides *another* ſpecies of hatred, ariſing from *competition*: in which the phænomena are in a manner *inverted*; and hatred ariſes from the cuſtomary cauſes of reſpect and love.

To prevent miſtakes on this ſubject, it may be fit to obſerve, that even *inanimate* cauſes of

* Ariſt. Rhet. lib. 2.

of pleaſure, as they cannot but pleaſe in imagination, are often ſaid to produce *love*; and *v. v.* But though the ſame word be uſed, the ſentiment is very diſtinguiſhable. When we ſpeak of loving *grapes*, or hating phyſic, our meaning is not the ſame, as when we ſpeak of loving our *children*, or hating a *tyrant*.

2. *Reſpect* ariſes from qualities or circumſtances capable of being applied either to good or ill. This ſentiment ſeldom riſes high, unleſs we diſcern a remarkable diſparity between others and ourſelves. Hence often proceeds an uneaſy reflection, which is apt to terminate in hatred.

Contempt ariſes from obſerving either a remarkable deficiency in ſuch qualities, or an appearance of other qualities inconſiſtent with them.

BEFORE we quit this part of the ſubject, it ſhould be obſerved, that the eſteem a man obtains from others confirms him in the good opinion he had of himſelf; and therefore cannot fail of being acceptable to him. His ſelf-eſteem too is farther increaſed by ſympathy; and, on both accounts, *fame* (already an object of deſire, for the reaſon before given) is rendered ſtill more deſirable.

II. *Of benevolence and malevolence.*

1. BENEVOLENCE is only a ſpecies of *ſympathy*.---*General* benevolence is a principle of little force*, unleſs when the imagination is ſtrongly impreſſed with the *pains* of others; in which caſe it takes the name of *compaſſion*.---Benevolence to *particular* perſons conſtantly attends *love*, of whatever kind, and, where there is no competition, is ſometimes alſo produced by *reſpect*.

2. *General* malevolence is a principle ſeldom, if ever, to be found in our nature.—Malevolence to particular perſons uſually reſults from the opinion we entertain of their characters and conduct. For this opinion, as we have ſeen, produces *hatred*: and hatred ſeldom exiſts, without ſome degree of ill-will. *Anger* may be conſidered as a ſpecies of hatred; ariſing (for the moſt part) from ſome apparent injury, and producing a ſtrong, but temporary, *malevolence*. —Malevolence, when independent on perſonal character, reſults from *compariſon*. We *envy* in others the goods we want, whether of nature or fortune: and we ſometimes feel a *ma-*

licious

* This is to be underſtood of its *immediate* influence: for *indirectly*, as it gives occaſion to *moral* ſentiments, it may have very conſiderable effect.

licious pleaſure, in ſurveying thoſe evils, from which we ourſelves are free*.

III. *Of the Senſe of Honour.*

THIS ſentiment has been incidentally explained already: I only give it a place here, in conformity to the practice of other writers; for it is evidently included in the paſſions mentioned above. We have but to repeat, and unite, the conſiderations before ſuggeſted.

WE receive pleaſure from the *belief*, or *imagination*, that we poſſeſs the eſteem of others, on two accounts: 1. Becauſe the good opinion of others confirms the opinion we have of ourſelves; and the eſteem of others, by the force of *ſympathy*, ſtrengthens our ſelf-eſteem: 2. Becauſe the principle of *aſſociation* has connected the eſteem of others with the *advantages* to be obtained from their friendſhip. The truth of this account will be ſeen by obſerving, *whoſe* eſteem it is that we value moſt: viz. theirs whoſe *opinion* has moſt weight, or whoſe *friendſhip* is ſuppoſed to be moſt uſeful.

ON the other hand, we receive *pain* from the *contempt* or *diſlike* of others, as depriving us of both

* The Greeks had a name for this principle as well as its oppoſite. Φθόνος μὲν γάρ ἐστι λύπη ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίοις ἀγαθοῖς, ἐπιχαιρεκακία δὲ ἡδονὴ ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίοις κακοῖς. Plut. de Curioſ.

both theſe advantages.—To this head belongs the paſſion of *ſhame*: which is only a diſeſteem of ourſelves, joined to a quick ſenſe of honour. The ſame ſenſe of honour, when joined with *ſelf-eſteem*, takes the name of *vanity*. In the one caſe we are anxious to avoid *diſgrace*, in the other to obtain *applauſe*.

IV. *Of the Moral Senſe.*

THERE is one kind of ſentiment ſtill to be added, which was deſigned for the regulation of all the reſt, *approbation* and *diſapprobation*. The power of receiving theſe ſentiments is called by ſome the *moral ſenſe*: by others, who ſeem to have thought the word *ſenſe* might be liable to a wrong interpretation, the *moral faculty*.---Call it what you pleaſe, there are certain *feelings* in the mind, the objects of which, and indeed the *peculiar* objects, are determinations of the *will*. Voluntary obedience to any uſeful principle of action, or voluntary reſiſtance to any hurtful principle, produces approbation; the contrary, diſapprobation *: perhaps from our *anticipating* the good or ill which uſually

* It may be objected perhaps that *all* the principles in our nature may be ſhewn to be uſeful. They are ſo when not *abuſed*, i. e. miſapplied, or exceſſive. They are ſo, in their proper *place*, i. e. not interfering with more extenſive, or more important principles of action. In either of theſe caſes, a good principle changes its name and its nature: and is no longer intitled to our regard and compliance.

uſually ariſe from ſuch conduct, and *ſympathizing* with thoſe, who are ſuppoſed to enjoy the one, or ſuffer the other.---It is difficult to conceive, how it can have happened, that the *reality* of theſe ſentiments ſhould ever have been diſputed. They are not indeed *innate*: for *no* ſentiments are innate. But they are *common*, I ſuppoſe, to our whole ſpecies. There is not a nation upon earth, whoſe language wants words to expreſs theſe feelings: probably there never was a ſingle man, who was void of all perception of *right* and *wrong*.

THE ſentiment above deſcribed is diſtinguiſhable from all others, not only by our inward conſciouſneſs, but by the following *marks* which are inſeparable from it. It does not depend on the *ſucceſs* of men's endeavours; but ſimply on the *intention* with which they act. It has no peculiar relation to *ourſelves*; but rather gives a *preference* to other men, and principally regards the *general* happineſs. It is conſtantly attended with another ſenſe, which may almoſt be conſidered as a part of it; the ſenſe of good and ill *deſert*. Whoever *rewards* the man we approve, or *puniſhes* the man we diſapprove, becomes *himſelf* on that account an object of approbation.

OBSERVE however that the moral ſentiment, as well as every other, may not only be produced by its own *peculiar* cauſe, but alſo by

ſympathy: and thus, in fact, it ſeems to be *firſt* introduced into every human mind.

BEFORE we conclude this ſubject, it may be fit to take notice, that this ſenſe or faculty is not uſually numbered among the *paſſions*. Nay, on the contrary, it aſſumes very frequently the name of *reaſon*. Language is arbitrary, and therefore various. I can only ſay, that theſe *moral* feelings are, as much as any *other*, *modes of pleaſure and pain*, though perhaps leſs violent than the reſt. If you diſlike the words *ſenſe* and *paſſion*, uſe any other, that will expreſs the ſame *idea*; and it will ſerve the purpoſe equally well. That we like or diſlike beneficial or hurtful *actions*; that theſe ſentiments lead us to like or diſlike the *agents*, if acting with deſign and choice; and that theſe agents are finally *approved* or *diſapproved*, as acting under the influence of good or bad *principles:* theſe only are the material points, which we mean to aſſert.

Recapitulation.

1. SOME paſſions reſpect indifferently good and evil of all kinds, and all the various objects, which are capable of producing or preventing either.---Such are our deſires and averſions; hopes and fears; joys and ſorrows.

2. OTHER

2. OTHER paſſions reſpect only *intelligent* cauſes of pleaſure or pain. Such are eſteem and diſeſteem; benevolence and malevolence; the ſenſe of honour and diſhonour; the ſenſe of moral good and evil.

3. ALL theſe paſſions are founded on this principle, that the image of pleaſure pleaſes, the image of pain diſpleaſes. They are drawn from this ſource, in various ways, by anticipation, compariſon, and ſympathy.

4. THESE obſervations are applicable not only to other paſſions, but to the moral faculty itſelf: which may be conſidered as a *peculiar* ſpecies of eſteem and diſeſteem, confined to the determinations of the *will*.

FINIS.